

ADULT TOOTH TRAUMA



It's one thing to bump a baby tooth. It's quite another to damage an adult tooth. Thankfully, there are generally only a couple of scenarios that require immediate care. Most adult tooth traumas can be managed at home and evaluated later - once everyone's had a moment to breathe. If immediate care is required, it's important to not postpone treatment. It is always a good idea to call a pediatric dentist to get their advice. Having helpful information on hand can improve the chances of a good outcome after damaging an adult tooth. This provides guidance in the event an adult tooth is damaged, as well as prepares you for some questions your pediatric dentist may ask. Most importantly, remember to BREATHE and STAY CALM.



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Say Cheese!

A picture is often worth a thousand words to your pediatric dentist, so snap a photo and be ready to send it during your conversation with your pediatric dentist.

Chipped or broken

Take a photo once everyone is calm. Is there a little red dot in the middle of the tooth, or is the broken part all white? This will help the pediatric dentist figure out just how large that chip is. They may refer you to a specialist, or want to check the tooth within a certain time frame. And avoid placing anything really hot or cold directly on the tooth.

Knocked-out

If an adult tooth gets knocked-out, the sooner it can get back into place, the better. If your child is healthy (without any significant medical conditions) and you're not worried about them swallowing the loose tooth, put it back in. If it's dirty, hold the tooth by the larger "crown" side, and rinse it under cold water. If you're nervous about putting the tooth back in, or can't do it for other reasons, place the tooth in cold milk (or saliva) as soon as you can. Call your pediatric dentist right away. If Save-A-Tooth or Hank's Balanced Salt Solution (HBSS) is available, placing the tooth in one of these kits/solutions is the best way to store the tooth while it's out of the mouth. Keep a small jar of this nearby and it could help you save a tooth!

Loose or pushed into a new spot

Is the tooth blowing in the wind or just a little wiggly to the touch? Is it in the same place or has it moved to a new spot in the smile? Can your child still close their mouth or has the tooth's new position become a problem? Having these answers will help your dentist better understand the injury.

Bump

What was bumped? Did the child bump their lip or cheek, or did they bump a tooth? Maybe both? If they bumped their lip or cheek, hold a cool compress over the area to help with any swelling that may develop later. Swelling often looks worse the next day, so don't be alarmed if this is the case. Make sure to call your pediatric dentist if you think or are unsure if a tooth was involved.

Cut

Is it bleeding? If you can, hold clean pressure on the area to stop the bleeding. Things may look messy. They often do in the mouth because our spit makes a little bit of red, look like a lot of red! Stay calm and try to get the bleeding to stop. If it doesn't stop after a short time, call your pediatric dentist or an emergency center if appropriate.

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