



### What is dental trauma?

Dental trauma is a common kind of injury. By adulthood, almost 1 out of 3 people have had some form of trauma to their teeth and/or jaw.

### Who is at most risk for a dental injury?

Your child is at the highest risk for having these injuries when they are:

- Toddlers learning to walk
- Between 8-10 years old and getting their adult teeth

Your child is also at a higher risk if they:

- Have special needs
- Have poor movement coordination
- Play sports (structured competitive or even just in the backyard)
- Have orthodontic issues, like their top front teeth stick out

If your child has had dental trauma in the past, they're 5 times more likely to re-injure the same tooth, especially if they're younger than age 9.

Please talk with your child's dentist if you think that your child may be at increased risk.

### What are common dental injuries?

#### Knocked-out tooth

Try to tell if it's a baby tooth or an adult tooth. If it is an adult tooth, replace it back into your child's mouth and see your dentist as soon as possible!

- Hold the tooth by the crown and gently rinse it with water if it's dirty.
- Try your best not to touch the root of the tooth and don't scrub the tooth.
- Gently place the tooth back into the hole it fell out of while you head to the dentist.
- If you can't do this, place the tooth in milk (not water) and bring it to the dentist.



#### Broken tooth

- Try to rinse your child's mouth with warm water to clean the area.

- If you have the broken piece of tooth, bring it to your dentist when you take your child in. It might be able to be glued back on.
- Use a cold compress to help with swelling.

#### Objects in between the teeth

- Try to gently remove the object with dental floss.
- Do not use a sharp instrument.
- Call your child's dentist with questions or if you can't get it out.

#### Broken jaw

- If you think your child broke their jaw, bring them to an Emergency Room right away.
- Use cold compresses to help with swelling.

### What do I do if my child has a trauma?

Call your child's dentist right away for advice.

If you think your child had a head injury or lost consciousness (blacked out), they need to see a doctor. You may need to go to an Emergency Room or make a doctor's appointment before being seen by the dentist.

### How can I protect my child's teeth during sports?

Encourage them to wear a mouth guard during sports. Ask your child's dentist about the best type of mouth guard for your child.

- Your child should wear a mouth guard while playing every sport.
- A custom (specially made) mouth guard is best, but is not right for all children.
- An over-the-counter mouth guard can be a good option if it fits well.

#### Contact us

For more information, visit  
[bostonchildrens.org/dentistry](http://bostonchildrens.org/dentistry)