

# What to do in a dental emergency

It's important to take action quickly in emergency dental situations. Below are a few tips on how to handle tooth injuries and pains:

- **Knocked-out tooth**

Find the tooth immediately and place it in a glass of slightly salted tap water or cold milk without first cleaning or scrubbing it. Take the tooth to your dentist as soon as possible, preferably within 30 minutes of the injury, and he or she may be able to replace it in your mouth.

- **Broken tooth**

Rinse your mouth with warm water to clean the area and soothe the tooth. Place an ice pack on the cheek nearest the injury to help keep the swelling down. See your dentist as soon as possible.

- **Toothaches**

Keep food away from the tooth that hurts. Rinse your mouth with warm water after eating and floss your teeth. If your jaw is swollen, place an ice pack on the cheek that hurts. Do not put heat or aspirin on the painful areas.

Toothaches can have a number of causes, such as an unnoticed cavity, gum disease, a crack in a tooth, or a new filling that doesn't fit right. See the dentist as soon as possible, particularly if swelling is present.

- **Mouth sores**

Avoid acidic foods, such as oranges and pineapples, which can "sting" the sores. Often, sores in the mouth are canker sores, which are small ulcers. Call your dentist if your mouth sores persist for more than two weeks. If you notice any lumps or white patches in or around your mouth, you should see your dentist immediately, as they may indicate a more serious problem.

Whenever you have a tooth injury or pain, it's important to seek care from your dentist as soon as possible. Keep your dentist's phone number handy!