

ADVERTISING FEATURE

DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Mouth injury can cause teeth and jaw problems that last a lifetime

April is dental health month and an ideal time to learn more about your child's dental safety.

A mouth injury can cause teeth and jaw problems that last for the rest of your child's life. To protect your child's teeth, always use infant car seats and seat belts when you

drive, do not let babies chew on hard things that could crack their teeth and see your dentist right away if your child injures a tooth.

If a permanent tooth (or adult tooth) is completely knocked out, your dentist may be able to save the tooth if you act quickly.

If the tooth is clean, and if there is no danger that your child will swallow it, put it back into its socket. If this is not possible, put it in some cold milk. Go to the dentist right away.

If the tooth is put back in place within 10 minutes, it has a fair chance of taking root again. If the tooth is put back within an hour, there is less chance of it taking root.

After two hours, the chances are poor. It's hard to say what will happen to that tooth in the future because the child is still growing.

If the tooth is broken, use warm water and gently clean any dirt from around the injured area in your child's mouth.

Put ice on your child's face near the tooth, to keep the swelling down. Take your child to the dentist right away.

If the break is a small one, the dentist may use a white filling to repair the tooth. If the break is larger or deep into the

tooth, the dentist may need to do a root canal and/or give the tooth a crown.

If your child has a bitten tongue or lip and there is bleeding, press down on the part of the mouth that is bleeding, using a clean cloth.

If the lip is swollen, use an ice pack to keep the swelling down. If the bleeding does not stop, go to the emergency department right away. Then you can go to the dentist.

If your child is playing sports, ask your dentist about getting a mouthguard.

Mouthguards help prevent dental injuries. They act as a cushion to prevent broken jaws, neck injuries and concussions.

If you support your child in wearing a mouthguard, it will become part of being safe — like wearing a seat belt in the car or a helmet on a bicycle.

Your dentist can make a mouthguard that's the perfect fit for your child's mouth. This is called a custom-made mouthguard.

The two other kinds of mouthguards are mouth-formed and stock. Your dentist can explain the difference in cost, comfort and how well they protect your child.

For more information on how to care for your child's teeth, ask your dentist. Only your dentist has the training, skill and expertise to provide a complete diagnosis, and to advise you about the right treatment and care for your child.

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