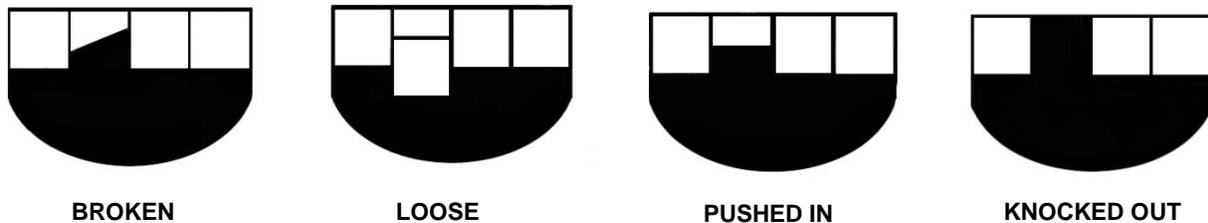


Dental Injury: Post Treatment Instructions

When a child has a serious dental injury (Picture 1), it may take many weeks for the teeth and gums to heal before we know if they will have problems in the future.

With prompt and proper follow-up care by a dentist, some problems, such as pain and infection, can be caught and treated early to prevent future problems. Still, your child may need more treatments, like a root canal or removal of a tooth or teeth. It is important to keep all follow-up appointments and see a dentist regularly.



Picture 1 After a serious injury, it is important to keep all follow-up appointments with the dentist.

Activity

Please follow the instructions below:

- Keep teeth clean. Brush gently twice a day.
- If put in, keep dental splint clean. Brush gently twice a day.
- Do not bite directly on the injured teeth until the dentist says it is OK.
- Eat only **soft foods** for at least for 2 to 3 weeks. Examples include yogurt, mashed potatoes, soup, gelatin, and pudding. Avoid foods that are very hot or very cold.
- Do not play contact sports until the dentist says it is OK.
- Wait to get braces until the dentist says it is OK.

Medicines

Based on the type of dental injury, the dentist may recommend your child use a mouth rinse and take medicines, such as antibiotics.

For pain, your child can take over-the-counter medicine like ibuprofen (Motrin[®]) or acetaminophen (Tylenol[®]). Read the label on the bottle to know the right dose for the age of your child. Do not give aspirin to children. Never give them medicine for adults.

Follow up appointments

It is very important to keep all follow up appointments. Even if a tooth does not hurt after the injury, it still needs to be checked at specific times by the dentist. If injured teeth are not checked at these times, the teeth may be damaged forever or lost.

The length of time between follow-up visits to the dentist may vary from a few weeks to many years, depending on how bad the injury was. When a child receives timely care and proper treatment, the chance of tooth loss is reduced.

It is best to return to the Nationwide Children's Hospital Dental Clinic or to the dentist who treated your child's injury for all related follow-up appointments. If your child was seen in the dental clinic and you choose to follow-up with their own dentist, please ask the dentist to call the clinic to coordinate your child's care.

When to call the dentist

Call the Dental Clinic if your child:

- has a fever over 102° F (38.9° C) and looks very sick
- a part of the face or around the tooth swells
- the tooth changes color or turns grey or black
- the gums around the tooth gets a bump, changes color or becomes sore
- the splint comes loose
- the temporary filling comes loose or falls out
- there is a lot of bleeding or pain at the injured site

During the day, call the Nationwide Children's Hospital Dental Clinic at (614) 722-5650.

On evenings and weekends, call the operator at (614) 722-2000 and ask to speak with the pediatric dental resident on call.