

5 DEALING WITH COMMON DENTAL EMERGENCIES

EMERGENCY #1: DAMAGED TOOTH

- Rinse your mouth with warm water. Use a cold compress to reduce any swelling.
- If the tooth is chipped, find the chip, if possible. Put it in a plastic bag with a few drops of water or wrap it in wet gauze to keep it moist. See a dentist at once to repair the tooth.
- If the tooth is cracked, avoid chewing on anything hard or sticky and visit your dentist as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY #2: TOTAL KNOCK-OUT

- **Child's baby tooth:** Place the tooth in water or milk to keep it moist. See a dentist as soon as possible to see if the tooth can be replaced.
- **Adult (permanent) tooth:** Try putting the tooth back into the socket. Hold it at the top, being careful not to touch the root. If this isn't an option, put the tooth between your cheek and gums or in milk to keep it moist. Get to a dentist at once.

When you shouldn't wait:

Though your first instinct may be to visit the ER or urgent care center, it can be costly and ineffective. Most medical facilities can supply temporary pain relief, but they're not usually equipped to treat dental issues. Delaying treatment can cause serious complications, so you may need to find a dentist with emergency hours.

Tele-dentistry may be a good choice depending on the severity of the injury. Check if your dentist offers tele-dentistry visits, so you can meet virtually while you're away from home.

If you're not sure if the situation is a true emergency or if you have any of these symptoms, call 911 or get to the ER:

- Trouble breathing, even if due to swelling
 - Heavy bleeding
 - Severe pain
- High fever that medicine doesn't reduce

EMERGENCY #3: PAINFUL TOOTHACHE

- Rinse your mouth with warm water. Use floss to gently remove debris that may be stuck between your teeth.
- If the pain continues or gets worse, go to a dentist or urgent care center – this could be a sign of a serious infection.

EMERGENCY #4: DAMAGED BRACES

- **Loose or broken braces bracket:** Use orthodontic wax to hold it in place. If the bracket has fallen off completely, keep it and see an orthodontist as soon as possible.
- **Dislodged wire:** If the wire is poking your mouth, use orthodontic wax to prevent pain and hold it in place until you can see the orthodontist.
- **Protruding wire:** You may have to clip the wire close to the bracket using sterile nail clippers. Hold the wire being clipped to prevent swallowing it. Tie floss to the clippers for easy retrieval if they accidentally fall into your mouth. Cover rough edges with wax.

EMERGENCY #5: DISLODGED CROWN

- If your crown falls off, clean it off and keep it.
- Stick the crown back onto the tooth using dental adhesive, toothpaste or temporary dental cement, which are available from the pharmacy.
- Make a dentist appointment to have the crown put back on. If it falls off again, keep it in a clean bag until your appointment.
- Avoid chewing on the crown and stick to soft foods.



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At United Concordia, we employ a team of clinically licensed dental experts with ample experience in the field and in the dental industry. The foregoing are best practices, tips and suggestions for treating an emergent dental condition. In the event you experience a dental emergency, contact your dentist or emergency care provider immediately.

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