



Information for Patients & Caregivers

What you need to know about Dental
Injuries in Sports.

Valid From: 28th June 2020

Date of Next Revision: 28th June 2022

Do you know that poor mouth and dental hygiene can affect the well-being and the quality of life of athletes?

This may indirectly affect your performance and increase your risk of dental injuries.

WHAT ARE DENTAL INJURIES?



Dental injuries refer to those injuries that affect the:

- Teeth.
- Jaws.
- Soft tissues connected to the teeth and jaws.
- Muscles of the face.
- Joints between the jawbone and the skull.

Every sport poses a risk for dental injury due to falls, collisions and contact with hard surfaces or sports equipment, but the more common teeth injuries are those associated with the "contact sports".

Whatever the case may be, immediate assessment and treatment is key.

The most common dental injuries in sports include:

- Broken tooth (tooth fracture).
- Knocked-out tooth.
- Dislodged tooth.
- Jaw dislocation.

Mouth guards help prevent most injuries and do not affect your breathing or speech if fitted properly.

+ TYPES OF DENTAL INJURIES

Dental injuries in sports can be classified into:

- **Soft tissue or oral trauma** such as:
 - Lacerations and tears involving the lip or cheek.
- **Hard tissue or tooth injuries** such as:
 - Knocked-out tooth.
 - Tooth fractures.



+ WHAT THE SPORT DENTISTRY TEAM WILL DO TO HELP YOU?

The Sport Dentistry team is a group of healthcare professionals that work together to provide dental care to professional athletes.

They provide:

- **Pre-season dental screening** to detect early dental problems.
- **Regular check-ups** and advice on oral hygiene and healthy eating habits.
- **Advice** on how to prevent injuries to the mouth and face during sporting events.
- **Emergency and general treatments** for dental or mouth injuries.
- **Awareness on oral health** and how it affects an athlete's performance.
- **Custom-fitted mouth guard.**



+ HOW DO I PREVENT DENTAL INJURIES?

You can prevent or reduce your risk of a dental injury by:

- **Maintaining a good oral hygiene:**
 - Brush your teeth and gums at least twice daily for at least two minutes using a toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.
 - Brush your teeth after 30 minutes of having a sugary meal.
- **Maintaining a healthy diet:**
 - Avoid acidic and unnecessary high sugar food and drinks.
- **Always use a mouthguard** especially if you engage in contact sports.
- **Smoking cessation:**
 - Avoid smoking cigarettes and smokeless tobacco

+ ANNUAL DENTAL SCREENING

As a professional athlete you should undergo routine dental screening at least once every year. During this screening, your doctor will:

- Ask questions about your medical and dental history, and diet or eating habits.
- Do a thorough examination of your mouth and teeth.
- Order an X-ray or CT scan if necessary, depending on the findings.

TIPS ON CARING FOR YOUR MOUTHGUARDS

Always ensure that your mouthguards are:

- Stored in a plastic protective container.
- Regularly inspected for distortion and tears.
- Rinsed with water before use and washed after each use in cold or lukewarm water.

+ DENTAL TREATMENTS

There are different types of treatment depending on the type of dental injury.

Knocked-out tooth. A tooth that is knocked out is a dental emergency and requires prompt treatment. The tooth should be placed back into the tooth socket within 15 min to 1 hour of the injury.

Try and re-insert the tooth using the following steps:

- Handle the tooth carefully by the top (crown).
- Remove any debris by gentle rinsing the tooth with saline or tap water.
- Place the tooth by hand back into the socket.
- Keep the tooth in place by biting on a clean towel or handkerchief.
- See a dentist for treatment as soon as possible.

If it is not possible to replace the tooth in the gums, store it in a container of cold milk or your saliva.

Do not store the tooth in water. This will reduce the chances of healing of the tooth.

Broken permanent tooth. Broken teeth can usually be repaired successfully:

- To get best possible outcome you should see a dentist for treatment within two days from the time of the injury.
- If your teeth are sensitive to hot or cold, then you need to be treated urgently.
- Sometimes tooth fragments can be reattached, if possible, store your teeth fragments in milk and go to dentist for treatment as soon as possible.

Oral Trauma:

- Tears and small wounds inside the mouth usually do not require stitches.
- Large cuts especially if near the tip of the tongue or between the teeth, may require stitches.

+ MEDICINES BANNED AMONG ATHLETES

There are some medications or substances that are prohibited among professional athletes. You should avoid taking these medicines.

Some of them are totally prohibited in athletes, while others are banned only during competitions.

Examples include:

- Body building steroids.
- Certain diuretics ('water pills').
- Mood enhancing medicines (Psychostimulants) except caffeine and nicotine.
- Cannabis (Marijuana).

Ask your doctor to tell you more about these prohibited substances.

IMPORTANT TIPS:

- Replace your toothbrush at the signs of wear to help keep your teeth properly cleaned.
- Drink enough water regularly to maintain a healthy saliva flow which prevent food particles from lodging in your teeth where bacteria can grow.

+ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information on Dental Injuries in Professional Sports can be found in the National Clinical Guideline published by The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) Qatar.

The Guideline is available to the public from the MOPH website: www.MoPH.gov.qa

