



# Information for Patients & Caregivers

## What You Need to Know about Dental Emergencies.

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Do you know that poor oral and dental hygiene can affect your well-being and quality of life?

Poor dental hygiene can also increase your risk of severe dental trauma or infections.

## + WHAT ARE DENTAL EMERGENCIES?

Dental emergencies refer to dental trauma or conditions that require immediate treatment to minimise or prevent the risk of serious medical or dental complications.

There are two major types of dental emergencies:

- Dental emergencies caused by serious trauma to the teeth, the surrounding tissues in the mouth, face, and jaws. These are called **Traumatic Dental Emergencies**.
- Dental emergencies are not related to any direct trauma. These are called **Non-Traumatic Dental Emergencies**.

Common examples of dental emergencies include:

- Broken tooth
- Knocked-out tooth.
- Dislodged tooth.
- Uncontrollable mouth bleeding after tooth extraction.
- Gum cuts or mouth.
- Toothache
- Swollen gums
- Swollen gums or ulcers accompanied by fever.
- Numbness in the teeth, gum, or mouth.

If you have any of the above mentioned, you should see your dentist as soon as possible for a check-up.

## + CAUSES OF DENTAL EMERGENCIES

Common causes of dental emergencies include:

- **Direct trauma to the teeth gum, mouth, face, and head.**
  - Falling.
  - Sports accidents.
  - Fighting.
  - Tripping or getting pushed with an object in the mouth.
  - Road accidents.
- **Dental procedures or operations** such as teeth removal.
- **Dental infections.** Gum or root canal infection can cause severe pain and swelling.

## + WHEN SHOULD I SEE A DENTIST?

You should see a dentist as soon as possible if you have:

- A broken, loose, or knocked-out tooth after an accident.
- Tooth pain not relieved by over-the-counter medications.
- Bleeding from the mouth or gum after dental operation or procedure.
- Numbness in a tooth or pain in the jaw when opening or closing the mouth.

You should go to the emergency department if you have:

- Recent head or face trauma.
- Excessive or continuous bleeding from gum despite applying pressure.
- Large, deep, or gaping cut inside the mouth or on the face
- Rapidly increasing mouth swelling or ulcers.
- Difficulty in swallowing or breathing.
- High fever or chills.
- Jaw pain occurring with chest pain.
- Drooping of one side of your face, weakness in your arms or slurred speech.

## + WHAT WILL YOUR DENTIST DO?

To determine what the problem is, your dentist will ask some quick questions about your dental trauma or condition, existing medical conditions, and current medications.

The dentist will examine your mouth, teeth, gum, and other areas affected by the problem.

In some cases, the dentist may order an X-ray or other imaging test to check for broken or damaged teeth.

Depending on the underlying cause of your condition, the dentist may start treatment immediately or refer you for further specialist treatment.

The longer you put off visiting your dentist, the more serious the problem may become.



## + HOW TO PREVENT DENTAL TRAUMA?

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

- **Maintaining good oral hygiene:** Brush your teeth twice a day, with fluoride toothpaste for at least 2 minutes.
- Use mouthwash that contains fluoride.
- **Maintaining healthy diets:** Avoid acidic and high sugar food and drinks.
- **Always use a mouthguard:** Especially if you engage in contact sports.
- **Smoking cessation:** Quit smoking - if you smoke.
- **Annual dental check-up:** You should a check-up with your dentist at least once every year to reduce the risk of developing dental problems.

## TIPS ON CARING FOR TOOTH PAIN AT HOME

Follow these tips when caring for dental pain at home:

- **Avoid very cold or hot foods** because these may make the pain worse.
- Take over-the-counter pain relief medicine to help ease your pain.
- **If you have a stomach ulcer or a liver or kidney problem, consult your doctor before using any over-the-counter medicine for pain.**
- **If you have a toothache caused by a trauma, apply a cold compress to the outside of your cheek to help reduce pain.**
- **Avoid participation in any contact sports until the pain has resolved.**
- **Eat soft foods until you can see your dentist.**

## + TREATMENTS FOR COMMON CASES

Treatment depends on the location of the trauma, its severity, and your age. That is whether the injured tooth or teeth is in a child or an adult.

**Knocked-out tooth.** A knocked-out child's tooth does not need to be put back. A knocked-out adult tooth needs prompt treatment. The tooth should be placed back into the tooth socket within 15 min to 1 hour of the trauma.

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

- Handle the tooth carefully by the top (crown).
- Remove any debris by gently 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 reposition the tooth in the gum line, store it in a container of cold milk or your saliva.

**Do not store the tooth in water** as this will reduce the chances of the tooth healing properly.

**Broken teeth:** Broken teeth in children may require extraction. It is possible to repair broken adult teeth:

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

**Oral trauma:**

- Large cuts especially if near the tip of the tongue or between the teeth may require stitches.

**Surgery:** The doctor may refer you for surgery if you have a jaw or facial bone fracture.

**Antibiotics:** The dentist will usually prescribe these medicines if there is evidence of a dental infection.

## TIPS ON DENTAL BLEEDING:

If you start bleeding after a dental treatment, or mouth trauma, the following advice may be helpful:

- Apply pressure over the bleeding area with clean gauze or pad slightly dampened with clean water.
- Keep the pad in place for 30 minutes and then check to see if the bleeding has stopped. If not, repeat the process and keep the pad in place until you see a dentist.

## + FOLLOW-UP

After leaving the Dental Clinic, you should take your medications as prescribed and attend all follow-up appointments.

If you have any concerns, call your dentist. Avoid consuming excessive amounts of painkillers, as this can exacerbate or prolong the problem.



## + ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information on the treatment of dental emergencies 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](http://www.moph.gov.qa)