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## **DENTAL EMERGENCIES**

Injuries to the mouth may include teeth that are knocked out (avulsed), forced out of position (extruded) or broken (fractured). Sometimes lips, gums or cheeks have cuts. Oral injuries are often painful and should be treated by a dentist as soon as possible.

### **EVULSED TEETH**

When a tooth is knocked out you should:

- \* Immediately call your dentist for an emergency appointment
- \* Attempt to find the tooth
- \* Gently rinse, but do not scrub the tooth to remove dirt or debris
- \* Place the clean tooth in your mouth between the cheek and gum or place in a cup of milk if patient is a child or injured to badly to hold tooth in mouth safely.
- \* Get to the dentist as soon as possible. If it is within a half hour of the injury, it may be possible to re-implant the tooth.
- \* Usually if teeth are re-implanted, the tooth will mostly likely need a root canal in the future.

### **EXTRUDED TEETH**

If the tooth is pushed out of place (inward or outward), it should be repositioned to its normal alignment with very light finger pressure. Do Not force the tooth into the socket. Hold the tooth in place with a moist tissue or gauze. Again, it is vital that the injured individual be seen by a dentist as soon as possible to evaluate gums, bone and tooth. A root canal will most likely be needed in the future.

### **FRACTURED TEETH**

How a fracture tooth is treated will depend on how badly it is broken. Regardless of the damage, treatment should always be determined by a dentist.

**Minor Fractures** -- Minor fractures can be smoothed by your dentist or simply left alone. Another option is to restore the tooth with a composite restoration (tooth colored). In either case, you should treat the tooth with care for several days.

**Moderate Fractures** -- Moderate fractures include damage to the enamel, dentin and or pulp. If the pulp is not permanently damaged, the tooth may be restored with a permanent crown or veneer. If pulpal damage does occur further dental treatment will be required with a root canal therapy.

**Severe Fractures** -- Severe fractures often means a traumatized tooth which has a slim chance of recovery. Sometimes a root canal can be attempted but prognosis is questionable. Most severe fractures need to be extracted and later replaced with an implant, bridge, or partial denture.

### **INJURIES OF THE SOFT TISSUES OF THE MOUTH**

Injuries to the inside of the mouth include lacerations and punctures wounds to the cheeks, lips, gums, and / or tongue. The wound should be cleaned right away and the injured person taken to the emergency room for necessary suturing and proper head X-rays to check for additional head trauma. Bleeding from any laceration can be reduced by using a clean cloth or gauze and apply direct pressure on the wounded area.