

Dental Emergency Guide



SCOTT CLINTON, DDS, MAGD
BOBBY HANEY, DDS

125 Park Place Boulevard • Waxahachie, Texas • 75165
972-937-4370 • Fax: 972-937-4369 • www.waxfamdent.com

Any dental emergency like an injury to the teeth or gums can be potentially serious and should not be ignored. Ignoring a dental problem can increase the risk of permanent damage as well as the need for more extensive and expensive treatment down the road.

Here's a quick summary of what to do for some common dental problems.

- **Lost filling:** As a temporary measure, stick a piece of sugarless gum into the cavity (sugar-filled gum will cause pain) or use over-the-counter dental cement. Call our office as soon as possible.
- **Lost crown:** If the crown falls off, make an appointment to see Dr. Clinton or Dr. Haney as soon as possible and bring the crown with you. If you cannot make appointment right away and the tooth is causing pain, use a cotton swab to apply a little clove oil to the sensitive area, (clove oil can be purchased at your local drug store or in the spice aisle of your grocery store). If possible, slip the crown back over the tooth. Before doing so, coat the inner surface with an over-the-counter dental cement, toothpaste, or denture adhesive, to help hold the crown in place. Do not use super glue!
- **Toothaches:** First, thoroughly rinse your mouth with warm water. Use dental floss to remove any lodged food. If your mouth is swollen, apply a cold compress to the outside of your mouth or cheek. Never use heat, if the tooth is infected, the heat will cause the infection to spread. Never put aspirin or any other painkiller against the gums near the aching tooth because it may burn the gum tissue. Call our office as soon as possible.
- **Abscess:** Abscesses are infections that occur around the root of a tooth or in the space between the teeth and gums. Abscesses are a serious condition that can damage tissue and surrounding teeth, with the infection possibly spreading to other parts of the body if left untreated.

Because of the serious oral health and general health problems that can result from an abscess, call our office to schedule an appointment as soon as possible. You may discover a painful pimple-like swelling on your gum from the infection. In the meantime, to ease the pain and draw the pus toward the surface, try rinsing your mouth with a mild salt-water solution (1/2 teaspoon of table salt in 8 ounces of water) several times a day.

- **Chipped or broken teeth:** Save any pieces. Rinse the mouth using warm water; rinse any broken pieces. If there's bleeding, apply a piece of gauze to the area for about 10 minutes or until the bleeding stops. Apply a cold compress to the outside of the mouth, cheek, or lip near the broken/chipped tooth to keep any swelling down and relieve pain. Call our office as soon as possible.
 - **Knocked-out tooth:** Retrieve the tooth, hold it by the crown (the part that is usually exposed in the mouth), and rinse off the tooth root with water if it is dirty. Do not scrub it or remove any attached tissue fragments. If possible, try to put the tooth back in place. Make sure it is facing the right way. Never force it into the socket. If it is not possible to reinsert the tooth in the socket, put the tooth in a small container of milk (or cup of water that contains a pinch of table salt, if milk is not available). In all cases, contact our office as quickly as possible. Knocked out teeth with the highest chances of being saved are those seen by the dentist and returned to their socket within 1 hour of being knocked out.
 - **Bleeding after losing a baby tooth:** Place a clean folded piece of gauze or paper towel over the site. Ask the child to bite down on the piece of gauze or paper towel for 15 minutes. Repeat if necessary.
-