

## BROKEN OR LOST TOOTH: WHAT TO DO

Sometimes a tooth that has been knocked out may be reimplanted, if you protect it and contact your dentist immediately. The best chance for successful reimplantation is within 30 minutes of the injury.

It's important to protect the root of the tooth by keeping it moist and guarding it against bacteria. Handle the tooth as little as possible, and only by the top (crown). Don't try to clean or scrape the roots, although you may rinse the tooth very gently with water. If you can, place the tooth back in its socket temporarily and bite down carefully on something soft, like gauze. You could also place the tooth between your cheek and gum to

keep it safe. Be very careful not to swallow or inhale the tooth.

Another option is to place the tooth in a clean container and cover it with a small amount of saliva, saline, or milk (not water). Do not transport the tooth dry: it will be damaged within minutes.

If your mouth is bleeding, apply a cold compress and bite down on gauze or tissue.

Get to your dentist immediately.

If your tooth is fractured but in its socket, you should still call your dentist for an examination. A fractured tooth could cause an infection. There might be microscopic damage to the blood vessels or nerves, eventually causing loss of the tooth.

