



## Dental Trauma - Causes, Symptoms and Treatment

Vladimir W Spolsky\*

### Dental Trauma

Dental trauma is physical injury to the teeth, gums, the alveolar bone (the bone that holds the tooth sockets), or the soft tissue of the mouth, including the lips and tongue. There are several types of injury that fall under the category of dental trauma, including the following:

- Chipped tooth
- Tooth fractures, including root fractures, enamel fractures, etc.
- Tooth knocked loose (subluxation)
- Tooth jammed into socket (intrusion)
- Tooth knocked out (avulsion)
- Fracture of the tooth socket wall
- Jaw fracture
- Lacerations of the lips
- Lacerations of the gums

### What are the causes of dental trauma?

Most cases of dental trauma are caused by accidents, including falls, vehicle collisions, and playing sports. Some cases are due to being involved in violent incidents, such as fighting or physical abuse.

### Treatments for dental trauma

The treatment depends on the nature of the trauma. Injuries to the mouth and teeth should be examined by a dentist, especially if a tooth or teeth have become loose or sustained damage. In some cases, when a tooth is visibly damaged, the neighbouring teeth may also have injuries that are not necessarily visible unless detected by a dental exam.

For chipped or fractured teeth, a tooth-coloured filling may be recommended to replace the lost part of the tooth. If a significant part of the crown has been lost, an artificial crown or cap may be offered instead.

If the pulp is exposed, a root canal may be needed. Injuries to the back teeth, including fractured cusps, may require a root canal and full coverage crown. More serious injuries such as split teeth may require the tooth to be removed completely. Dislodged (luxated) teeth should be re-stabilised by the dentist and root canal treatment may be needed. Children under the age of 12 may not need root canal treatment, as their teeth are still developing and may be able to heal on their own. The dentist will monitor them carefully to see if any additional treatment is needed. Teeth that have been knocked out (avulsed) may be replanted if you act quickly. You should see your dentist or an endodontic immediately if you receive treatment within 30-40 minutes, there is a good chance you will save the tooth; any longer than this and the odds diminish considerably. If the tooth can be found, handle it carefully by the crown don't touch the root. The dentist will place it back in its socket and a stabilising splint will be placed for a few weeks, after which you may require root canal treatment. In some cases, such as if the knocked out tooth cannot be found, or if it is not treated soon enough, other treatment options to replace the tooth may be discussed.

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\*Corresponding author: Spolsky W Vladimir, Division of Public Health and Community Dentistry, UCLA School of Dentistry, USA. E-mail: vladimirs22@gmail.com

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### Author Affiliation

Division of Public Health and Community Dentistry, UCLA School of Dentistry, USA