

Specialist Paediatric Dental Service

Bumps and Breaks of Baby Teeth



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Bumps to baby teeth are very common. 1 in 5 experience trauma to their teeth.

The leaflet will help you to understand a bit more about trauma to baby teeth, what to look out for and how to look after your child's mouth whilst they are healing.



Group One: A Broken Tooth

Teeth have three layers (a bit like a good sponge cake!):

- 1. Enamel** - Hard, protective outer layer (icing)
- 2. Dentine** - Middle layer (sponge)
- 3. Pulp** - Nerve and blood supply (jam). This keeps the tooth alive

If the break is through the dentine, the tooth might be a bit sensitive to extremes of temperature (either hot or cold). A coating over the broken area can help prevent the sensitivity.

If the break goes through the pulp, the tooth will die. Dead teeth can cause pain and infection. Therefore, it may be best for this tooth to be removed.



Group Two: A Knocked Baby Tooth

After a tooth has been bashed or banged it can result in a few different types of injury. The baby tooth can be...

Bruised

Teeth are held into the jawbone by mini threads, these are called ligaments. If a tooth is knocked, these can become bruised. The tooth can be sore to eat on until it heals. A soft diet will help.

Become wobbly

If the tooth has become wobbly, a soft diet is important until it heals.

Moved

If the tooth has been pushed in, out, forward or backward it may be sore.

To protect the developing adult tooth from further harm it may also mean the best option is to remove the baby tooth.

Knocked out

It is very important NOT to replace a baby tooth once it has fallen out as this can cause damage to the developing adult tooth.



How to spot a dying or infected baby tooth

For some teeth that have had a bash or bump, they will be OK until they fall out naturally and not need removing.

Call your dentist if you notice the following:

- Your child complains of pain.
- The tooth looks darker. This may mean the tooth has died.
- It becomes more wobbly.
- A gum spot or sinus. Once a tooth has died, it can become infected.
- A gum boil or abscess. This would also show that the tooth has become infected.

Will the developing adult tooth be ok?

Sometimes when the baby tooth has had a bash or becomes infected, the adult tooth can be affected.

This is most likely if the baby tooth has been pushed in or has been knocked out.

Affected adult teeth can have:

- White or yellow-brown patches.
- Poorly formed tooth structure, called hypoplasia.
- Curved root, called dilaceration.

For further help or information

Contact details

What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

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We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention.

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