Dental Trauma

DENTAL TRAUMA DECISION TREE

This information is designed to aid school nurses, teachers, and athletic coaches in treating minor dental emergencies.

Primary Tooth

Fracture with bleeding or loose tooth:
- Avoid cold foods
- See dentist immediately

Tooth out of socket, fracture with no bleeding, slight mobility:
- See dentist within 48 hours

Permanent Tooth

Tooth out of socket
- Pick up tooth by crown
- Rinse with water or saline for 10 seconds
- Do not touch root

Option 1:
- Place gently back in socket
- Bite on gauze
- See dentist immediately

Option 2:
- Store in milk, saliva, saline, or between cheek and gum
- See dentist immediately

Tooth displaced and/or very mobile
- See dentist immediately

Tooth slightly mobile
- Soft diet to minimize further harm
- See dentist within 48 hours

Tooth is fractured and/or chipped

No bleeding
- Keep and store fractured segment (if found) in small vial with tissue or cotton
- Avoid cold foods
- See dentist within 48 hours

Bleeding
- Keep and store fractured segment (if found) in small vial with tissue or cotton
- Avoid cold foods
- See dentist immediately

In a dental emergency
- Stay calm and reassure the student
- Notify the parent and/or guardian
- Wear gloves with any bleeding
- Rule out head injury
- Rule out jaw fracture (e.g., is bite alignment off?)

For any impact or injury involving the head
Evaluate for concussion
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Dilated pupils
- Cold/clammy skin

Helpful supplies
- Saline
- Gauze
- Save-A-Tooth Kits (www.saveatooth.com)

For help finding dental care: www.health.ri.gov/find/oralhealthservices