

Dental Emergencies

When is it really an emergency?

Our rule of thumb for dental emergencies: if you think it's an emergency, we do too. You should leave a message with our answering service, that is checked continuously each day, and we'll respond as quickly as we can. In the meantime, here's what to do until you get to our office.

Broken Fillings:

Save the filling so we can have a look at it. Rinse your mouth gently with lukewarm salt water to remove debris, if the tooth is sensitive. Protect it with dental wax or, in a pinch, sugarless gum.

Lost Crown:

Displaced crowns can sometimes be reused; hang onto it. Try to affix the crown with denture adhesive or if it won't stick, use dental wax to keep the tooth away from air.

Knocked-Out Tooth:

Don't panic. If we can treat you within about an hour, chances are we can reseat the tooth for good. Don't touch the tooth root—this could damage delicate nerves. Rinse and gently replace the tooth where it belongs if you can, or keep it moist in milk, saline, or saliva.

Bent Orthodontic Appliances:

With care, move a sprung wire or clasp away from soft tissue and cover with dental wax. Get to your orthodontist right away.

Damaged Bridges, Dentures, or Partials:

Do not risk home repairs. Glue can destroy composition materials and cause tissue erosion. Keep all the pieces, even the smallest, and call us. We can usually return an emergency repair to you in 24 hours.

Toothache:

Toothaches are common and nasty. Toothache tells you something is wrong that needs attention. Rinse your mouth with warm water and try to floss away any food particles. Don't lodge aspirin near the tooth—it will irritate, even ulcerate, gum tissue. Ice packs or a numbing agent may make you more comfortable while you're scheduling an appointment. Toothaches may "go away," but the source of the pain won't. Call us ASAP.

Lacerations or Jaw Damage:

Require immediate treatment at a hospital facility or an oral surgeon's office. Take such injuries seriously. Delay may result in further damage.