

Dealing with kids' summer dental surprises

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Outdoor activities can mean more injuries to teeth.

(HealthDay)—Children play a lot of sports and other outdoor activities during the summer and are at risk for accidents that can damage their teeth, an expert says.

"Collision injuries with a friend, the ground or the side of a [swimming pool](#) definitely increase during the summer," Dr. Stephen Mitchell, a [pediatric dentist](#) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, said in a university news release.

"If something like this occurs, remember first and foremost to make sure your child does not have a head injury," he said. "If they have lost [consciousness](#) or are dizzy, or if they can't remember how the injury happened, get [medical attention](#) and worry about the teeth later."

Once you're certain there are no medical issues, here are some tips on what to do about damaged teeth:

- If a tooth is broken, find the fragment and go immediately to the dentist, Mitchell said. This is especially important if the tooth appears to be bleeding from the middle and not just the gums.
- If a tooth is knocked out, it's best to try to put it back in immediately. The [gum](#) site is normally numb immediately following an injury, so this shouldn't hurt. If the tooth can be put back in the mouth within a half-hour, a full recovery is much more likely.
- If the tooth cannot be put back in the mouth, however, place it in milk and go straight to the dentist. Avoid touching the root of the tooth, and do not clean it beyond gently running it under water.
- If a tooth has been moved out of its normal location, make sure your child sees a dentist immediately.

Mitchell also said summer is a good time to schedule dental check-ups for children.

"Don't wait until the last two weeks of summer because appointments can get very scarce," he said. "Plan ahead for the best flexibility in appointments."

More information: The Nemours Foundation offers tips to keep [children's teeth healthy](#).

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