



## Leaflet: A Knocked Out Tooth

# A Knocked Out Tooth

About one in four children in Britain will injure a front tooth at some stage. Sometimes a tooth may be completely knocked out of its socket. What should be done?

### For first teeth ('milk' or 'baby' teeth )

These teeth start coming out naturally at about age 6 or 7. If one is knocked out earlier by accident - leave it out. Do not try and put it back as this may damage the adult tooth growing underneath. The adult tooth will grow eventually. Give some paracetamol mixture (Calpol, Disprol etc) if the injured gum is sore.

### For second or 'adult' teeth

These are commonly knocked out in older children and sometimes in adults. If one of these teeth is knocked out it is vital that:

*IT IS PUT BACK IN ITS SOCKET AS SOON AS POSSIBLE*  
and then  
*A DENTIST IS SEEN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO FIX THE TOOTH.*

An adult at the scene of the accident will usually be able to place the tooth back into its socket in the injured person's mouth.

- ◆ Do not delay doing this. Do not wait to see a dentist.
- ◆ If the tooth is clean, do it straight away and then seek dental help.
- ◆ Hold the tooth by the crown (the white shiny part normally seen in the mouth) and not the root. The root has delicate cells needed to attach the tooth so try not to touch this part.
- ◆ Take care to get the tooth the right way around.
- ◆ Once back in, get the injured person to bite gently on a handkerchief until seen by a dentist.

*What if the tooth is dirty?* A tooth may be knocked into some mud or dirt. Rinse the tooth in some cold water or milk. Do not scrub it or put it in disinfectant. This will damage the delicate cells on the root needed to attach the tooth back to the gum.

*Why is it best put back straight away?* The cells at the root of the tooth will usually attach firmly back to the tooth socket if they do not die. These cells at the root of the tooth will soon dry out and die if the tooth is not put back quickly. If they die the tooth will not attach again. The sooner a tooth is put back, the greater the chance of success.

*What if the tooth cannot be put back in?* Put the tooth in a cup of milk and see a dentist as soon as possible. The tooth must be kept moist. Milk is the ideal liquid to put the tooth in. Water on its own is not so good and milk is usually the best. If milk is not available, put the tooth in the injured persons mouth between their cheek and the gum. If the tooth is kept moist until it is put back in its socket there is a greater chance of permanent recovery. It may still be successful up to 24 hours after the accident.

If a dentist cannot be seen immediately after the accident, go to the local casualty department.

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