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## AAP News Parent Plus

INFORMATION FROM YOUR PEDIATRICIAN

### With prompt action, a knocked-out tooth can be saved

Losing primary (baby) teeth is a rite of passage for children, something that makes them feel big. But having a permanent tooth knocked out is a different story.

An injury that results in a knocked-out tooth can harm the way a child feels about himself and his appearance, according to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD). The child will have to deal with missing a tooth, maybe for years, and may need to go to numerous dental appointments before he has a tooth again.

Luckily, knocked-out permanent teeth often can be saved with appropriate, swift action.

If your child knocks his tooth out, call and go to your dentist or the emergency room as soon as possible. Follow these steps from AAPD to increase your chances of saving the tooth:

- Find the tooth and pick it up by the top (white crown). Do not pick it up by the root.
- If it is dirty, gently and quickly rinse it with cold milk (or water if you do not have milk).
- Do not scrape, scrub, brush or dry the tooth, and do not try to clean it with alcohol or peroxide.
- Replace the tooth into the socket and press down on the tooth with your thumb.



- Have your child bite down on a wad of gauze (or a washcloth or shirt) to keep the tooth in place until you reach the dentist's office.

If you cannot replant the tooth after five minutes, store it in a container of Hank's Balanced Salt Solution (which can be bought at many drugstores under the brand names Save-a-Tooth or EMT Tooth Saver), a cup of cold milk, a cup of your child's saliva or — as a last resort — a cup of water until you get to the dentist.

If your child loses a primary tooth, do not try to replace it in the socket because baby teeth usually cannot be replanted. Instead, apply gauze (or a washcloth or shirt) to control bleeding and call the dentist.

— Hilary Rasch

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