

Smiles to You



Summer is a time to lie back,
but continue to care for your smile!
It's the only one you have!

Remember the basics: Brush and Floss! Especially after eating sweets and sticky foods! Mouth guards help protect active children during their sporting activities. In Office mouth guards are made of heavier yet flexible material and can be custom colored. Over-the-counter, "boil and fit" mouth guards help too.

Prevention is Always Best. It's easiest. It's least expensive. It is the things you do every day that keeps the problems away!

When an accident occurs and there has been trauma to the mouth, here are some things to keep in mind.

The trauma will cause the area to be very sensitive; it can bleed a lot (and mixed with saliva it can seem like a lot more!)

If nothing seems broken and the teeth can come together as they normally do, it may be a bad bruise. Ice is best. Eat soft foods. It may not be an immediate need for observation, but still get checked when convenient.

For a broken tooth, place in milk and see your dentist as soon as possible. If it's a "clean break" (one piece) it may be possible to use the tooth and rebond it in place. If it's not a clean break, tooth colored bonding material is used to restore the tooth.

Depending on the severity of the break and how much broke off, the nerve may be affected. When this has happened, prolonged sensitivity and tooth darkening may occur, which indicates internal bleeding. A tooth in this condition can be saved with endodontic therapy, commonly called root canal therapy.

When trauma has occurred and the bite is off (the teeth do not come together normally), it may be because a tooth or bone has fractured. This is an emergent need to be seen as soon as possible to evaluate and reposition the loose tooth. The tooth may or may not need endodontic therapy and possibly, the patient could lose the tooth if it has suffered a root fracture.



If a tooth has come out, either a big piece or the whole tooth, put it in milk, which keeps it moist and clean. Do not touch the root part if possible. Seek help as soon as possible to try and re-implant the tooth in the socket. Again, it may or may not be accepted by the body.

If you feel confident about how it fits into the mouth and tooth socket, it's best to put the tooth back immediately into the socket before bleeding, swelling, etc. sets in. Be sure the tooth is clean. If it is bloody that's okay, but you want no foreign material like dirt in the socket.

If no milk is available, you can keep the tooth in the mouth – but do not swallow it! Place inside the lip between the cheek and teeth — rather like smokeless tobacco (...that's another subject for the future!)

Accidents can happen at any time, but an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

Best Wishes for a Safe and Happy Summer! **LL**

Dr. Robert Lantzy is a comprehensive family dentist in Newtown, Bucks County. He and his caring staff of professionals provide a range of services in a state of the art facility where the focus is on individualized attention and lasting patient-doctor relationships. You may reach the office at (215) 860-5901 or by visiting www.buckscounty-dental.com.

