



# Dental Safety at Home

## Simple Ways to Prevent Dental Injuries at Home

### Why Is Dental Safety at Home Important?

Many dental injuries happen **at home**, especially among young children and older adults. Falls, accidental impacts, and everyday activities can lead to chipped, broken, or knocked-out teeth.

Fortunately, many of these injuries can be prevented by creating a safe home environment and practicing simple safety habits.

Preventing dental injuries helps protect your smile and may reduce the need for emergency dental treatment.

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## Common Causes of Dental Injuries at Home

Dental injuries may occur during:

- Falls
- Slipping on wet floors
- Running indoors
- Climbing on furniture
- Bicycle or scooter accidents
- Rough play
- Biting hard objects
- Home improvement projects

People of all ages can experience dental trauma.

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## Protecting Young Children

Young children are naturally curious and still developing coordination.

Parents and caregivers can reduce injury risks by:

- Installing safety gates near stairs.
- Using corner protectors on sharp furniture.
- Keeping floors free of toys and clutter.
- Supervising young children during play.
- Securing heavy furniture to the wall.
- Encouraging children to walk instead of run indoors.

Creating a safe environment helps reduce falls and facial injuries.

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## Preventing Falls in Older Adults

Older adults have an increased risk of falls that may result in facial or dental injuries.

To improve safety:

- Remove loose rugs.
- Improve lighting throughout the home.
- Install grab bars in bathrooms.
- Use non-slip mats in showers.
- Wear supportive footwear.
- Keep walkways free of clutter.

Preventing falls also reduces the risk of fractures and head injuries.

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## Bicycle and Scooter Safety

When riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, or rollerblades:

- Wear a properly fitted helmet.
- Consider wearing a mouthguard during recreational activities.
- Follow traffic and safety rules.
- Ride on appropriate surfaces.
- Supervise younger children.

Helmets and mouthguards protect different parts of the body and work best when used together.

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# Avoid Using Teeth as Tools

Your teeth are designed for chewing food—not opening packages or holding objects.

Avoid using your teeth to:

- Open bottles
- Tear plastic packaging
- Cut thread
- Crack nuts
- Hold nails, screws, or pins

These habits increase the risk of chipped, cracked, or broken teeth.

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# Be Careful with Hard Foods

Certain foods increase the risk of tooth fractures.

Examples include:

- Ice cubes
- Hard candy
- Unpopped popcorn kernels
- Hard nuts
- Bones

Chewing carefully helps reduce unnecessary stress on your teeth.

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# Protect Your Teeth During Home Projects

When using power tools or performing home repairs:

- Wear appropriate safety glasses or a face shield.
- Avoid holding nails or screws in your mouth.
- Keep work areas organized.
- Follow equipment safety instructions.

Facial injuries can occur unexpectedly during home improvement activities.

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## If You Grind Your Teeth

People who grind or clench their teeth while sleeping may benefit from a custom-made **night guard**.

A night guard helps:

- Protect teeth from wear
- Reduce the risk of cracks
- Protect dental restorations

Ask your dentist if you think you grind your teeth at night.

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## What Should You Do If a Tooth Is Injured?

If a tooth is chipped or broken:

- Rinse your mouth with water.
- Save any broken pieces if possible.
- Contact your dentist promptly.

If a permanent tooth is completely knocked out:

- Hold it by the crown, not the root.
- Gently rinse it if dirty.
- If possible, place it back into the socket.
- If this is not possible, store it in cold milk or a tooth preservation solution.
- Seek emergency dental care immediately.

Quick treatment greatly improves the chance of saving the tooth.

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## Create a Dental Emergency Kit

Keeping a small dental emergency kit at home can be helpful.

Consider including:

- Clean gauze
- A small container with a lid
- Saline solution
- Disposable gloves
- Your dentist's contact information

Being prepared can make it easier to respond quickly if an injury occurs.

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## Common Myths

**"Dental injuries only happen during sports."**

**False.**

Many dental injuries occur at home during everyday activities.

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**"Baby teeth don't need emergency care."**

**False.**

Although baby teeth eventually fall out, injuries should still be evaluated because they may affect the developing permanent teeth.

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**"A chipped tooth can always wait."**

**False.**

Even small fractures should be evaluated, as deeper damage may not be immediately visible.

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## Key Takeaways

✓ Many dental injuries occur at home and are preventable.

- ✓ Childproofing the home helps reduce the risk of falls and facial injuries.
  - ✓ Older adults can lower injury risk by preventing falls.
  - ✓ Never use your teeth as tools.
  - ✓ Wear helmets and mouthguards during appropriate recreational activities.
  - ✓ Seek prompt dental care for chipped, loose, or knocked-out permanent teeth.
  - ✓ A few simple safety habits can help protect your smile for years to come.
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