Preventing Injuries

Mouthguards

- You should protect your teeth by wearing a mouth guard at all times during contact sport.
- “Custom made” is better than “over-the-counter” as it is more comfortable and fits accurately. The dentist has to take moulds of your teeth and make the mouthguard on these models.
- Have it checked annually by a dentist.
- Tips for caring for your mouthguard include:
  - Rinse in cold water after use.
  - Store in a well ventilated plastic container.
  - Keep out of direct sunlight - mouthguards will distort in high temperatures so don’t leave them in the car.
  - Occasionally rinse your mouthguard in a mouthwash.
  - Do not wash it accidentally with your clothes.

Lost Teeth

If a permanent tooth is knocked out,

1. Find the tooth and hold it by the crown and not the root. The crown is the shiny white part of the tooth normally seen in the mouth.
2. If it has dirt on it rinse it with milk or saline, such as contact lens cleaner, for a few seconds. Do not rub it or use water or chemical agents on it.
3. Try to place it back in the socket ensuring it is the right way round. The neighbouring teeth can provide a guide. The tooth should ideally be replaced within 5 – 10 minutes. This is so the cells on the root that re-attach to the gum do not die.
4. Hold the tooth in place by biting on a soft cloth. Alternatively place aluminium foil over the tooth and the teeth either side to stabilise the tooth.
5. If you are unable to replace the tooth in the socket keep it damp by storing it in a cup of milk or placing it in the conscious patient’s mouth beside the cheek. Do not let the tooth become dry.
6. Contact the dentist immediately because the longer the tooth is out, the worse the prognosis.

When playing, children should be supervised by a responsible adult.