



After your child has had a tooth taken out

This leaflet explains what to do and what to avoid when your child has had a tooth taken out at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Cleaning your child's mouth

Do not rinse your child's mouth for 12 hours afterwards – this will let the socket (where the tooth was) start to heal.

The day afterwards, rinse your child's mouth with warm salty water after every meal, and continue for the next five to seven days. You can make up the mouth rinse as follows:

- Fill a cup with hot water and dissolve half a teaspoon of salt in it.
- Allow the water to cool down enough so it will not burn your child's mouth
- Your child should take a mouthful of water and hold it over the socket until it cools, then spit the water out and repeat until the cup is empty.

If your child is too young, you can use some gauze soaked in the warm salt solution to wipe gently around his or her mouth.

Brushing your child's teeth

Your child can start brushing his or her teeth again gently the day afterwards. This helps the socket to heal and prevents infection.

If the socket starts to bleed

- Your child should rinse his or her mouth once to remove any blood clot
- Roll up a piece of clean, dry cloth, handkerchief or gauze and dampen it with water.
- Put this over the socket and encourage your child to bite hard on it for 15 to 20 minutes.

Do not use tissues or cotton wool as they fall apart when wet and can leave bits in your child's mouth, which is unpleasant and can start an infection.

Things to avoid

Over the next few days, while the socket is healing, it is important to prevent it bleeding. This can make the socket take longer to heal.

- Your child should not play sport or do anything else very energetic for 24 hours.
- Try to discourage your child from fiddling with the socket – this includes poking it with fingers or anything else, and trying to feel it with his or her tongue.
- Your child will probably need to avoid hard foods for the first day or so, but after that, he or she should eat normal foods.
- Your child should avoid hot drinks or food for a few days



Medications

- Your child may be given a course of antibiotics. Follow the instructions and make sure he or she takes the complete course.
- Your child may need to have regular pain relief for at least three days. Regular pain relief like paracetamol will usually be enough, but remember to follow the instructions on the bottle or packet. As well as the medications, distracting your child by playing games, watching TV or reading together can also help to keep your child's mind off any pain.

You should call the Dental department if:

- the socket continues to bleed;
- your child is in pain and pain relief does not seem to help;
- your child develops a rash or any other reaction to the antibiotics.

However, swelling around the socket is normal and usually lasts seven to ten days.

If you have any questions, please telephone the Dental department on 020 7829 8614 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Out of hours, please call University College Hospital on 020 7387 9300 and ask to speak to the Oral Surgery doctor on call.

Compiled by the Dental Department in collaboration with the Child and Family Information Group
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