

PATIENT GUIDE

A knock to the mouth during treatment

What to do in the first minutes after a blow to the mouth, with braces or without, and when it is urgent. · 31 Aug 2026

A knock to the mouth during treatment usually means a cut lip and a bent wire, both of which are fixable. Occasionally a tooth is loosened, moved or knocked out, and for a knocked-out permanent tooth the first thirty minutes decide whether it can be saved. Know the steps before you need them.

A permanent tooth knocked out

A first tooth (a primary tooth) that is knocked out is NOT put back; it can damage the permanent tooth beneath. Keep it, and see a dentist to check the area.

1. Find it and hold it by the crown

The white part you normally see. Do not touch the root.

2. Rinse it briefly if dirty

A few seconds under cold water or in milk. Do not scrub it and do not let it dry out.

3. Put it back if you can

Push it gently into the socket the right way round and hold it there by biting on a folded tissue. This is the single most useful thing anyone can do.

4. If you cannot, keep it wet

In milk, or in the cheek of the person it belongs to if they are old enough not to swallow it. Never in water and never dry.

5. Get to a dentist or us within the hour

Call on the way. A tooth replanted within thirty minutes has a good chance; after an hour dry, much less.

A tooth that is loose or has moved

Do not push it back yourself if it has moved, and do not wobble it. Bite gently on a folded tissue to keep it still, eat nothing hard, and message or call us the same day. If braces are on, the wire is often holding the tooth in a good position, which is one of the quiet advantages of being in treatment.

Cuts, bent wires and damaged braces

Rinse with cold water and press a clean cloth on any cut for ten minutes. Lips cut on brackets look dramatic and heal quickly; cover the sharp spot with wax. If a wire is bent away from the teeth or a bracket has been knocked off, wax what you can and message us with a photo so we book the right visit. If the aligner or retainer was in and is cracked, go back to the previous set.

Message us if

- Any tooth was loosened, moved, chipped or knocked out.
- The braces, expander or retainer were damaged.
- Biting feels different than it did before the knock.
- A tooth changes colour in the weeks afterwards. Tell your dentist as well.

Call us on (09)520 1880 or email hello@milkkorthodontics.co.nz.

Common questions

Should we go to the hospital or to you?

A suspected broken jaw, a head injury, or bleeding that will not stop is a hospital. A tooth problem on its own is a dentist or us, the same day.

Does this change the treatment plan?

Sometimes a knocked tooth needs to rest for a few weeks before we move it again. We adjust the plan around it and tell you what changes.