



APRIL Get active

Starting a new fitness activity? Don't forget a mouthguard

If you've ever played contact sports like hockey or football, a plastic mouthguard might seem like standard equipment. But did you know that oral health experts also recommend wearing a mouthguard to protect your lips, cheeks and teeth when you do noncontact recreational activities, too? You may want one if you do any of the following:

- > acrobatics
- > bicycling
- > skateboarding
- > skiing
- > skydiving
- > surfing
- > weightlifting

You can find ready-made mouthguards at sporting goods stores or get one custom-made from your dentist. Either way, an effective mouthguard is one that stays in place during your activity and allows you to speak and breathe easily. It should be comfortable, flexible and keep you safe while you're out there having fun.

Sources: American Dental Association, Dentalxchange via Delta Dental

Trivia time:

How many teeth are injured or knocked out every year?

Answer: 5 million

For healthy teeth, limit sports drinks

It might seem natural to reach for a sports drink after working out, but dentists warn that these sugary, acidic beverages can damage teeth even more than soda. You can enjoy the occasional sports beverage, though, if you take these steps to limit its harm:

- > drink it in one sitting instead of sipping on it throughout the day;
- > sip it through a straw to avoid coating your teeth;
- > drink water afterward to flush the acids from your mouth.

Source: *Journal of the American Dental Association*

What to do if you lose a tooth

No one wants to deal with a knocked-out tooth, but if you act quickly you can save your smile:

1. Pick up the tooth by the crown, not the root.
2. Gently rinse with water. Don't use soap, dry it or wrap it up.
3. Reinsert in the socket and keep moist.
4. See a dentist or endodontist ASAP, ideally within 30 minutes.

If you act fast, the tooth can be replanted in your mouth and last for years.

Source: *American Association of Endodontists*

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