



Dental problem?

Call your dentist before heading to the emergency room

A toothache or a broken tooth can seem like an emergency, but before going to the emergency room (ER), call your dentist. ERs and even urgent care facilities don't have dentists on staff. Dentists' offices usually have an urgent or emergency number on their after-hours recordings, and they're your best help for dental problems.

Of course, if you have a true emergency, always head for the nearest ER.

Here's a quick guide to help you decide where to get the best care when you need it.



See your dentist

for dental-related issues that aren't life-threatening but need attention, like:

- Cracked or fractured teeth that are painful or have sharp fragments (a chipped tooth that doesn't hurt isn't an emergency)
- Lost or knocked-out teeth (seek care as soon as possible)
- Lost fillings or crowns (don't try to glue it!)
- Pain from a cavity
- Pain or swelling from a wisdom tooth
- Pain caused by infection, if you don't have swelling or fever and aren't having trouble breathing or swallowing

If you have any of these issues, call your dentist right away.



Go to the nearest ER or call 911

if you have a true emergency, such as:

- A broken or dislocated jaw
- Lots of bleeding or bleeding you can't control
- Severe swelling or fever
- Trouble breathing or swallowing

You should also go to the ER if you:

- Think the problem could get much worse or even kill you
- Have an immune system illness
- Have a serious long-term illness

Help avoid a dental health emergency

Preventing a problem from happening is always your best bet, so it's a good idea to:

- Have a dentist you see regularly and can call when you do have a problem.
- Keep your teeth and gums healthy by brushing twice a day and flossing every day, and see your dentist for oral checkups and teeth cleanings twice a year.
- Wear a mouth guard to protect your teeth if you play a contact sport like football or soccer.

