**It’s a Bird! It’s a Plane! It’s an Endodontist – A Superhero of Saving Teeth!**

Attention, citizens! In a world where people are always looking to upgrade to the newest version, Save Your Tooth Month aims to value the irreplaceable – and that includes our natural teeth! You should always strive to save your natural tooth. Nothing looks, feels or functions better. In fact, keeping your teeth healthy can even have positive effects on your heart health. Endodontists rescue precious teeth with root canal treatment. So we refer to these tooth savers as superheroes of saving teeth.

**Look Up!**

In a world where people are often looking down, we urge you to LOOK UP this May. Look up at someone’s smile (after all, according to our recent survey, teeth are among the first things we notice about a person – almost instantly!).

Look up for long enough, and you might just see the American Association of Endodontists’ message and colors in the skyline of Chicago. That’s right; Chicago will quite literally be lighting up the sky in honor of Save Your Tooth Month in early-May.

So we urge citizens in this city to celebrate, too!  
  
According to the AAE’s Fall 2022 Public Survey, **87% of Americans Wish They Had Taken Better Care of Their Teeth, and More Than 90% are Unaware of What to Do in the Event of a Knocked Out Tooth!**

More than five million teeth are knocked out every year – but only 9% of adults in the U.S. know what to do if it happens. Following the right steps can save the tooth!:

* Pick up tooth by the crown (the chewing surface) not the root. Locate the tooth immediately; do not leave it at the site of the accident. The tooth should be handled carefully—touch only the crown—to minimize injury to the root. If dirty, gently rinse tooth with water only.
* **Reposition tooth in socket immediately, if possible.** The sooner the tooth is replaced, the greater the likelihood it will survive. To reinsert, carefully push the tooth into the socket with fingers, or position above the socket and close mouth slowly. Hold the tooth in place with fingers or by gently biting down on it.
* Keep tooth moist at all times. The tooth must not be left outside the mouth to dry. If it cannot be replaced in the socket, put it in one of the following: • Emergency tooth preservation kit • Milk • Mouth (next to cheek) If none of these is practical, use water (with a pinch of salt, if possible).
* See an endodontist or the nearest available dentist within 30 minutes if possible.

Also according to that survey, three in four Americans are committed to doing everything they can to preserve their natural teeth – even though more than half are not going to the dentist every six months as recommended.

Even though more than one in three Americans admit they notice someone’s teeth right away when meeting them, oral health care is more than just vanity; it impacts overall health. While the majority of Americans realize gum disease and oral cancer may be tied to poor oral health, 80% don’t identify strokes and 77% don’t identify heart attacks as possibly linked to poor oral care.

Download Survey Infographic for more stats!: <https://www.aae.org/specialty/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/12/AAE-Holiday-22-Infographic.pdf>

Helpful general article on the value of root canals: <https://www.aae.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/AAE0223_asi.pdf>

Some great basic info on the importance of endodontists: <https://www.aae.org/patients/why-see-an-endodontist/>

Cracked tooth data from ADA’s HPI (2021): <https://www.ada.org/publications/ada-news/2021/march/hpi-poll-dentists-see-increased-prevalence-of-stress-related-oral-health-conditions>

**Keep the celebration going by helping the public learn what to do if they crack their teeth. Here are five things to know about cracked teeth:**

**1.** **How does one crack a tooth?**

A crack can occur from injury or general wear and tear caused by grinding or clenching ones’ teeth – a symptom of stress. While cracked teeth are not completely preventable, you can take some steps to make your teeth less susceptible to cracks by not chewing on hard objects such as ice, unpopped popcorn kernels or pens. Protective mouth wear, such as a mouthguard, can also be worn to mitigate the damage teeth grinding can cause.

**2.** **How will I know if my tooth is cracked?**

Cracked teeth show a variety of symptoms, including unpredictable severe pain when chewing, or pain when your tooth is exposed to hot and cold food and beverages. In many cases, the pain may come and go, but it’s vitally important to seek care right away.

**3.** **What if my tooth is chipped?**

Chipped teeth account for the majority of dental injuries. Most chipped teeth can be repaired either by reattaching the broken piece of tooth enamel or by bonding a tooth-colored filling or crown in place, but treatment should be sought as quickly as possible. Find an endodontist as soon as possible after the injury to treat your chipped tooth and to keep it from worsening.

**4. Should I go to the hospital if I experience a cracked tooth or other dental emergency?**

If you’re experiencing a dental emergency, it’s best to avoid the emergency room or an urgent care facility and to seek care from an endodontist right away. If you are experiencing severe dental pain or dental infection symptoms (e.g., bleeding, swelling) contact an endodontist immediately or go to [findmyendodontist.com](https://www.aae.org/patients/findmyendodontist/) to find a local endodontist.

**5. Where can I go to learn more about cracked teeth and other oral health related matters?**

To learn more about safe and effective treatment options and concerns about oral health, visit [aae.org/patients](https://www.aae.org/patients/).

*The AAE is headquartered in Chicago and represents 8,000 members worldwide. Endodontics is one of 12 dental specialties formally recognized by the American Dental Association. The AAE, founded in 1943, is dedicated to excellence in the art and science of endodontics and to the highest standard of patient care.*