



Delta Dental Plan of Minnesota

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SUMMER SMILE SAFETY CAMPAIGN CHALLENGES ATHLETES
TO KEEP THEIR SMILES SAFE**

*Delta Dental Plan of Minnesota Partners with Minnesota Thunder to
Tackle Oral Injuries in Youth Sports*

EAGAN, MINN. (July 14, 2005) – Mouthguards are estimated to prevent approximately 200,000 injuries each year. According to Sports Dentistry, injury to the teeth is 60 times more likely in athletes who do not wear mouthguards. For this reason, Delta Dental Plan of Minnesota has partnered with the Minnesota Thunder professional soccer team to promote a Summer Smile Safety campaign and remind young athletes to protect their smiles by wearing mouthguards. As part of the campaign, Thunder players are encouraging attendees at the Minnesota Thunder youth soccer camps to wear mouthguards while playing sports.

“We want athletes and parents to know that anyone participating in sports should always wear a properly fitted mouthguard to protect their teeth. And this includes not just organized sports, but also sporting activities with friends,” said Dr. Dick Hastreiter (DDS, MPH), vice president and dental director at Delta Dental Plan of Minnesota. “Mouthguards should be considered standard equipment for activities such as football, volleyball, basketball, in-line skating and other athletic and recreational activities that may pose a risk. But if a tooth is knocked out, there are steps that immediately should be taken to try to save the tooth.”

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8 First Aid Tips for a Knocked-Out Tooth:

1. Find and pick up the tooth by the enamel or top portion of tooth to prevent damage to root.
2. Handle the tooth as little as possible and do not touch the root surface.
3. If dirty, gently rinse with water, but do not scrub or use soap or chemicals.
4. If possible, replace the tooth into the socket immediately and hold in place with fingers or by gently biting down on it.
5. If tooth cannot be replaced in the socket, keep it moist at all times and do not wrap in a tissue or cloth.
6. Get to the dentist as soon as possible; if replanted by a dentist within 15-30 minutes, there is a 90 percent chance the tooth will be retained for life.
7. Transport the tooth to a dentist in an emergency tooth preservation kit, milk, mouth (next to cheek), or if none of these options are practical, in clean water with a pinch of salt, if possible.
8. For baby or primary teeth, do not place it back into the socket. This could damage the formation of the permanent tooth bud. Seek immediate advice from a dentist.

References: American Dental Association, Academy of General Dentistry, and Sports Dentistry

For more information about mouthguards and oral health, please visit our Web site at www.deltadentalmn.org. To receive the Summer Smile Safety leaflet distributed at the youth soccer camps (taking place through mid-August), please contact Ann Rogers at (651) 994-5312. For more information about the Minnesota Thunder soccer team and summer camps, please visit www.mnthunder.com.

About Delta Dental Plan of Minnesota

An innovator in oral health benefit plans, Delta Dental Plan of Minnesota is an independently operated, nonprofit dental services company that administers self-insured and prepaid dental service plans. Delta Dental serves more than 8,500 employer groups with more than 3.3 million members in Minnesota and across the nation. Delta Dental Plan of Minnesota is headquartered in Eagan, and has a customer service center on Minnesota's Iron Range.