

Collecting Extracted Teeth Safely

You need to collect extracted teeth with and without fillings and with and without cavities to practice on in dental school. Now is the time to ask general dentists, periodontists and oral surgeons to save teeth for you.

Because extracted teeth are potential sources of infection, you need to handle them carefully. Follow these guidelines when handling extracted teeth.

We advise you to store teeth in a securely sealed, plastic specimen container in a 1:10 Clorox (bleach) solution. These teeth should be cleansed of adherent material by scrubbing with detergent and water or cleaned in an ultrasonic unit.

We will autoclave (sterilize) the teeth before you use them. All extracted teeth that are used in the simulation laboratory will be sterilized by steam autoclaving for 40 minutes at 121 degrees C and 15 psi in either saline or autoclaving bags to render them free of viable organisms. To avoid making the teeth brittle, the drying cycle should not be used during autoclaving or dry heat sterilization.

Use universal precautions, gloves, mask, eye protection, and disinfect contaminated surfaces when handling extracted teeth.

In Endodontics, you will need a full set of upper and lower teeth with relatively straight roots and no fillings or cavities to practice on. You will need many extra teeth to do this; generally about 15 teeth are screened before one is found that is acceptable. In Operative Dentistry you will need many different types of teeth, excluding third molars, with and without cavities and fillings.



Center for Disease Control Recommendations for the Decontamination Of Extracted Teeth for Use in Dental Educational Settings

The objective of these recommendations is to minimize the risk of transmission of Hepatitis B virus (HBV), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and other blood borne pathogens during the handling of extracted teeth for use in dental educational settings.

All extracted teeth should be considered infective because they contain blood. All persons who collect, transport, or manipulate extracted teeth should handle them with the same precautions as a specimen for biopsy. Universal precautions must be adhered to whenever extracted teeth are handled. All persons who might come in contact with blood or blood contaminated patient material in an occupational setting should receive hepatitis B vaccine.

The following precautions are recommended:

- 1) All specimens should be **stored in a securely sealed plastic specimen container** with a sufficient amount of either:
 - a. **Common household bleach, diluted 1:10** or
 - b. Other liquid chemical germicides commonly used for clinical specimen fixation.
- 2) Before manipulating extracted teeth in dental educational settings, the **teeth first should be cleaned of adherent patient material** (by scrubbing with detergent and water, or by using an ultrasonic cleaner) and then stored in a fresh solution of diluted bleach or other suitable liquid chemical germicide.
- 3) Persons handling extracted teeth **should wear gloves**. Gloves should be disposed of properly and **hands washed** after completion of work activities. **Additional personal protective equipment** (e.g. mask and eyewear, or face shield) should be worn if mucous membrane contact with debris or splatter is anticipated when handling, cleaning, or manipulating the specimen.
- 4) **Work surfaces and equipment should be cleaned and then decontaminated** with an appropriate liquid chemical germicide after completion of work activities.

