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MOUTHGUARDS

WHY DO I NEED A MOUTHGUARD?

Anyone who participates in a sport that carries a risk of contact to the face should wear a mouthguard. Every year, thousands of children are treated for dental injuries, which could have been avoided or minimised by wearing a protective mouthguard.

Damaged or knocked out teeth, broken jaws and cut lips can be sustained when playing sport. Wearing a custom-fitted mouthguard helps to absorb and spread the impact of a blow to your face, which might otherwise result in an injury to your mouth or jaw.

Dental injuries can result in time off school or work to recover. Such injuries can also be painful and disfiguring, and may involve lengthy and complex dental treatment. The cost of an injury to your teeth or jaw far exceeds the cost of a custom-fitted mouthguard.

A boil and bite mouthguard may be a short-term choice if there is absolutely no alternative available. However, even with careful attention to the directions, the best result is a poorly fitting mouthguard that offers inadequate protection. Some studies place their degree of protection only slightly better than wearing no mouthguard at all.



WHEN SHOULD I WEAR A MOUTHGUARD?

Custom-fit mouthguards should be worn whilst playing and training for any sport that could involve contact to the face. This includes high-contact sports such as football, boxing and rugby as well as collision sports where unexpected contact often occurs. This includes hockey, netball, basketball, cricket, squash, soccer, and even water and snow sports.

MOUTHGUARD TIPS

- The Australian Dental Association (ADA) recommends that only a professionally custom-fitted mouthguard should be worn.
- Have your mouthguard checked by your dentist for optimal fit and protection.
- Keep your mouthguard clean and store it in a rigid container, away from heat to ensure it maintains its shape.

WHICH TYPE OF MOUTHGUARD SHOULD I WEAR?

There are many types of mouthguards, ranging from cheaper, over-the-counter products to professionally custom-fitted guards. The Australian Dental Association (ADA) recommends that self-fitted, over-the-counter mouthguards are inadequate. For effective protection, a professionally-fitted custom mouthguard is essential.

CUSTOM-FITTED MOUTHGUARDS

Custom-fitted mouthguards are made by your dentist, who takes an impression and creates a plaster model of your teeth. Custom-fitting allows the dentist to accurately assess your mouth and provide the appropriate fit, size, coverage and thickness of your mouthguard. We can also make an assessment of any risk factors you might have and recommend the best type of mouthguard appropriate for your sport.

Custom-fitted mouthguards are comfortable, allow you to talk, have maximum resistance against dislodgement and should not restrict your breathing.

OVER-THE-COUNTER MOUTHGUARDS

These mouthguards are cheaper than custom-fitted ones. These include stock mouthguards that have no fitting at all, as well as “boil and bite” mouthguards that are self-fitted by softening them in hot water, inserting them into your mouth and allowing them to adapt to the shape of the mouth as they cool and set.

It is not recommended that you used a boil and bite mouthguard as they poorly fitting and less comfortable to wear as they have not been specifically fitted to the shape of your mouth and teeth. This greatly lessens their effectiveness and can increase the risk of damage to teeth.

HOW LONG WILL MY MOUTHGUARD LAST?

We will review your mouthguard every 12 months to ensure it fits correctly. Sometimes a mouthguard needs to be replaced if major changes occur to the teeth, like restorations or adult teeth coming through.

HOW DO I CLEAN MY MOUTHGUARD?

Mouthguards need to be rinsed in cold water after use, dried and stored in a plastic container. Mouthguards can distort under higher temperatures, so they must be kept in a cool place.

The information presented on this leaflet is only a summary of mouthguards and should therefore be used only as a guide. It does not replace personal discussion with your dentist. Should you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact us for advice. Please call us on 9840 2963.