

iRelaxTM

brux care



What Is Bruxism?

Bruxism is the medical term for grinding or clenching your teeth and jaws. Grinding refers to moving the jaw back and forth. Clenching refers to biting down with excessive force for long periods of time. Bruxism is a common condition and normally occurs during sleep or times of stress. Many people do not even know that they grind their teeth in their sleep until they are told by their sleep partner or dentist.

Over time, grinding teeth in sleep causes extensive damage to the structure and enamel of the teeth, which can lead to decay and increased sensitivity. It can also cause headaches, disrupt your sleep, and cause pain in the jaw, face, and neck.

Factors that may increase your chances of developing bruxism include:

- ✓ **Age:** *Bruxism is most common in young children.*
- ✓ **Personality Type:** *Individuals who are naturally competitive, aggressive, or hyperactive are more likely to experience bruxism.*
- ✓ **Intense Emotions:** *Many people unconsciously grind their teeth when under intense stress or when they feel angry or frustrated.*
- ✓ **Certain Medications and Substances:** *Tobacco use, drinking caffeine or alcohol, and certain psychiatric medications can increase your risk of bruxism.*
- ✓ **Other Health Conditions:** *Bruxism is often associated with other conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, sleep apnea, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.*

What Is the Process for Getting a Custom Night Guard?

The process for getting a teeth protector for sleeping is simple and painless. The dentist takes an impression of your teeth. The impression is used to create the mold that the lab will use to fabricate your night guard out of durable plastic. Once finished, the dentist will check the guard to ensure that it fits properly. Then all you have to do is wear the guard as you sleep. It may feel a little odd at first, but most of our patients get used to wearing their night guard quite quickly. The guard will not interfere with your breathing, and you will still be able to speak normally. Most people who complain about their mouth guard being uncomfortable are either wearing an over-the-counter device or one that was not fitted properly.

What are the benefits of a night guard?

Guarding Against the Grind: The Top Benefits of Wearing a Night Guard to Sleep.

- ✔ Prevents Tooth Damage. A night guard ensures that your top teeth and bottom teeth have no contact while you sleep.
- ✔ Reduces Jaw Tension And Pain.
- ✔ Prevents Headaches.
- ✔ Provides Healthy Sleep Patterns.
- ✔ Prevents Snoring.
- ✔ Saves You Money.

What Is a Custom Night Guard?

An oral night guard looks similar to the trays used for teeth whitening and sits over the teeth to protect them from grinding or clenching. The device may also be referred to as an occlusal splint, occlusal guard, or bite splint. A teeth protector for sleeping does not actually stop you from clenching or grinding your teeth; however, it does shield and cushion the teeth from excessive wear and helps re-establish the natural space between the upper and lower teeth.

Why Do People Wear a Teeth Protector for Sleeping?

Your dentist may recommend a night guard to help you with morning headaches, for TMJ jaw pain relief, and to prevent damage to your teeth, jaw, crowns, and other dental restorations.

Can a Bruxism Mouth Guard Provide TMJ Jaw Pain Relief?

Although a night guard is not the only treatment for bruxism or temporomandibular joint pain, it is an affordable, convenient, and non-invasive treatment option. A properly fitted night guard shifts the jaw and teeth into proper alignment, which can alleviate jaw tension, headaches, pain, and other symptoms of temporomandibular joint syndrome.

Why Is It Important to Get a Mouth Guard for Jaw Clenching?

Ignoring your bruxism symptoms can lead to serious dental issues requiring expensive treatments. For example, bruxism is a leading cause of root canals. Individuals who grind their teeth can experience up to 2 millimeters of enamel erosion by their 20s, which increases the risk for cavities. Jaw clenching can subject the jaw and teeth to as much as 40 minutes of massive force per hour, which can set the stage for jaw and muscle pain.

Although it is possible to buy less expensive mouthguards online or at your local drug store, there are several reasons why it is worth the extra money to see a dental professional for a custom-fitted device:

- ✓ A custom-fitted night guard will ensure that your jaw is in proper alignment, which can help with TMJ jaw pain relief.
- ✓ A custom-fitted night guard will fit properly, which means that it will be more comfortable and won't fall out during the night.
- ✓ Custom-fitted night guards are made from better materials than over-the-counter versions, so they typically last longer.



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PROS:

- Handles heavy clenching and grinding
- Longer lasting
- Usually offers a longer warranty than soft guards

CONS:

- Tend to be a little thicker than the other guards
- Seem to be harder to adjust to

Hard Night Guards

Hard night guards for teeth to treat Bruxism are made from acrylic and are extremely rigid but durable. They can be used for very severe cases of grinding, as well as TMJ.

PROS:

- Most durable
- Prevents teeth from shifting
- Usually offers the longest warranty

CONS:

- Thicker than soft night guards
- More uncomfortable than others
- Difficult to get used to sleeping in
- Need to be ordered directly through dentist since an accurate impression is needed for fit
- Can be more expensive than the others

Types of Night Guards

Soft Night Guard

This is the most commonly used type of night guard for teeth to treat Bruxism and used mostly for mild or occasional cases, not for severe teeth grinders.

PROS:

- Most comfortable fit of all the night guards
- Most adaptable/easy to get used to
- Usually lower cost

CONS:

- Some people unintentionally clench on to or chew the soft material
- Not as durable/limited lifespan
- Most warranties are only 6 months or less due to the limited life-span
- Not a long-term solution

Dual Laminate Night Guards

This type of night guard for teeth to treat Bruxism is for moderately severe teeth grinders. They are soft on the inside and hard on the outside.

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