

Why wear a custom made mouthguard?

Only 36% of children aged 5-17 wear a mouthguard during games and 19% wear one during training.

Wearing a custom-fitted mouthguard is the easiest way to protect yourself and/or your child against serious mouth injuries and costly medical bills. You wouldn't think twice about wearing a bike helmet or a seatbelt, so don't think twice about wearing a mouthguard. It is very important to wear a custom-fitted mouthguard when training and playing contact sport.

Reasons to wear a custom made Mouthguard

1. Cushions teeth against impact

Sports other than traditional contact sports can involve heavy knocks to the teeth and mouth. Wearing a mouthguard while playing any sport where there is a chance of being hit in the jaw or head will help prevent you from chipping, breaking or knocking out a tooth.

2. Protects against jaw joint injuries

Wearing a mouthguard helps to absorb and spread the impact or blow to the face which may otherwise result in an injury to your mouth or jaw.

3. Protects against soft tissue injuries

Cut, grazed or bruised lips, cheeks and gums are likely to occur as a result of direct impact to the mouth area. The reinforcement of a mouthguard can help minimise soft tissue injuries.

4. Helps prevent neck & jaw injuries

Any impact to the neck or jaw can result in serious injury. Wearing a mouthguard at the time of impact reduces the likelihood of jaw dislodgement or neck trauma.

4. May help reduce concussion

A head clash or trauma is not uncommon at both game time and in training. If the impact is a direct hit to the chin a mouthguard can prevent the lower jaw moving upwards and hitting the base of the skull. This movement can cause the brain to move which could result in concussion.



What to do if trauma occurs?

If you are not wearing a custom made mouthguard and experience trauma it is important to know what to do. If a tooth is cracked or chipped see a dentist as soon as possible.

If a primary (baby) tooth is knocked out, it is important to keep in mind the following:

- Do not attempt to put the tooth back in its socket. This may cause damage to the permanent tooth or lead to infection.
- See a dentist straight away to check if any pieces of tooth remain in the socket and to make sure no other damage has been done.
- To control bleeding, apply pressure directly to the injured area with a clean cloth. To minimise swelling, an ice pack or cold compress can be applied to the site of the injury.

If a secondary (adult) tooth is knocked out, it is important to do the following, immediately:

- Locate the tooth and handle it gently. If soiled, rinse the entire tooth in milk or, very quickly, in water to clean it.
- Place the tooth back in the socket, making sure it is facing the right way around. It is important to replace the tooth within 5-10 minutes of the tooth being knocked out.
- Hold the tooth in place by biting gently into a soft cloth. If you have a mouthguard but weren't wearing it at the time of the accident, this can also be used to hold the tooth in place. Otherwise, you can help keep the tooth in place by covering the damaged tooth and the teeth on either side with aluminium foil.

If it is difficult to put the tooth back in the socket, keep it moist by putting it in a small amount of milk or saliva in plastic wrap.

If in doubt about whether the tooth is primary or secondary, put it back in its socket. The risk of permanent damage to an adult tooth not replaced is greater than the damage caused by a baby tooth being put back in.

Immediately seek dental treatment for any damaged teeth - **time is critical** to prevent permanent damage.

Extreme care should be taken with a tooth that has been knocked out. Try to avoid the following:

- Do not handle the root of the tooth.
- Do not scrape or rub the surface of the tooth.
- Do not let the tooth dry out – keep it moist at all times.
- Do not put the tooth in ice or hot water.
- Avoid rinsing or storing the tooth in water for more than one or two seconds.
- Do not remove any soft tissue fragments from the tooth.

