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THE HIDDEN DANGERS OF NIGHTGUARDS



The Full Truth You Definitely Haven't
Heard Yet



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» In fact, mouth/night guards have been shown to actually make nighttime clenching, grinding and jaw muscle activity in some patients- even worse!

Mouth Guard Study Results

Mouth Guards and Night Splints are a \$415 million dental industry.

They are the "go-to" dental treatment option of choice for those suffering from teeth grinding, clenching and pain.

But- do they work?

Studies have suggested they do not provide significant evidence that they can reduce clenching behavior at night.

In fact in some studies, night guards have been shown to actually make nighttime clenching, grinding and jaw muscle activity- even **worse!**



In an article from Dentistry Today "The Basics of Oral Occlusal Therapy" July 2002, a leading dentistry publication- it very clearly summarized the role of the dental mouth guard in assisting TMJ patients

"It's important to remember that splints do not prevent (teeth grinding), rather, they distribute the forces across [the entire mouth]. They can decrease the frequency but not the intensity of grinding episodes."

MOUTH GUARD TEETH PROTECTOR

Certainly here the leading dental community has acknowledged that they do not expect a reduction in clenching or grinding behaviors when wearing a mouth guard. While wearing it, your unhealthy oral behaviors are often expected to continue. However, if you have a history of damaged teeth or possibly even severe clenching or grinding behavior, I am a proponent of an oral "safeguard" *specifically designed* with the criteria that I will share with you in the pages .

While often times they will not reduce your damaging oral behaviors, oral "safeguards" can play a vital role by effectively redistributing your jaw's clenching forces more evenly across the mouth. While tooth damage can still occur- this can still help keep the teeth safer.

While wearing a dental mouth guard, as your clenching persists- or even possibly increases, those jaw clenching muscles are quickly becoming overworked and exhausted. This can often lead to alarming jaw muscle tenderness, spasms, tightness and discomfort.

So let's just ask the question- why would a mouth guard occasionally contribute to even more of these destructive behaviors?



Think about it. Imagine putting something firm into the mouth of a habitual teeth-clencher. It can be like an idle dog with a bone. All of a sudden there's something tempting in that mouth that they can start joyfully gnawing away at!

So with these individuals it can aggravate their clenching behaviors even further. Clenching behaviors are known to create muscle irritation, fatigue and pain.



It's important to know that in addition to the increased clenching behaviors, that unfortunately mouth guards can- cause unintended harmful consequences.

Yes, that's correct. Studies show that there can be changes and deformities to the mouths and bites of patients wearing night guards. Their smiles and faces were radically altered from the wearing of their mouth guards.

And not in a very attractive way either.

Wide gaps were formed in their mouths between their upper and lower teeth. I've witnessed these facial changes in mouth guard and splint-wearing patients that arrive at my office seeking help. You can see an example of this from two of my patients on the left.

» **It's important to know that unfortunately mouth guards can - *cause unintended harmful consequences.***

MOUTH GUARD SUMMARY

So let's summarize what we've learned so far-

1

There is a lack of substantial evidence supporting any splint being effective in reducing bruxism

2

Research studies have show some splints actually made the behavior WORSE

3

They can also radically change your bite, smile and overall face's appearance- and NOT in a good way!

Now that I've shared these little nuggets about splints & mouth guards- things that dentists are unlikely to have shared with you...

Let's make sure that if you and your dentist do opt for a night guard- that you know which mouth guards or bite splints are most unlikely to have any harmful side effects.

Here I've included the criteria you'll want to look for-

