

Occlusal Appliance/Night Guard – Home Care Instructions

You have been fitted with a custom-made Occlusal Appliance, also known as a Nightguard, to reduce the damage caused by bruxism. Bruxism is the clenching and grinding of your teeth that most often occurs while you sleep, but can occur at any time of day. All the causes of bruxism are not known but stress is often a major factor.

Symptoms of bruxism can include:

- A sore, tired jaw
- Difficulty in opening and closing your mouth
- Sensitive teeth
- Earaches or pain in your jaw joint
- Flattened or worn-down teeth
- Teeth that are chipped at the edges or notched at the gumline (abfraction)
- Loose teeth
- Damage to the bone around your teeth
- Damage to your jaw joint (TMJ)

It is important to wear your Nightguard every night to protect your natural and prosthetic teeth and jaw joint. In addition, a nightguard can act as a retainer on the arch it fits on to prevent shifting of your teeth. It can take some time to get accustomed to wearing this appliance, so you may want to wear it for an hour or so before you actually go to bed.

Your Nightguard was designed and made to have a passive fit and may have been adjusted on the day it was given to you. However, if it feels tight when placed over your teeth, then place appliance under warm tap water for one minute, to slightly soften the surface touching your teeth, before inserting into mouth. Keep your Nightguard in the retainer case provided to you and keep your Nightguard and/or your retainer in a safe place and out of the reach of children and pets.

To clean your Nightguard:

- Rinse Immediately after removal from mouth. Use lukewarm or cool water right after taking it out to prevent saliva/plaque from drying. Avoid scalding hot water, which can warp the material.
- Gentle Scrubbing: Use a soft-bristled toothbrush or denture brush to gently clean all surfaces.
- Use Proper Soap: Use mild dish soap or hand soap rather than toothpaste, which can be too abrasive and scratch the surface.
- Air Dry: Let it dry completely on a clean towel for about 30 minutes to prevent bacterial growth.

Weekly Deep Cleaning Methods:

- Denture Cleaner: Dissolve a non-abrasive denture cleaning tablet (e.g., Polident or Efferdent) in a glass of water and soak the night guard for 10–15 minutes.
- CLEARsplint Night Guard Cleaner (recommended by our dental laboratory): DuraClean 2 NightGuard Cleaner. More information available at Duraclean2.com
- Don't use scalding hot water or alcohol-based mouthwash, which can damage or warp the plastic.

When to Call Us

Please call us right away if your night guard breaks, cracks, or chips, so we can properly repair or remake it. Also, call us if your bite feels uneven, your night guard becomes loose, you have sore spots, irritation, or discomfort, or if you have any questions or concerns. (772) 286-1606