



181 FM 3237 * Wimberley, TX 78676 * TEL: (512) 847-8934
Jennifer M. Roe, D.D.S., MAGD

OCCLUSAL SPLINT INSTRUCTIONS

Your occlusal splint is a removable appliance made of acrylic that covers the biting surface of the upper and lower jaw. The appliance is designed to protect and stabilize your jaw muscles and joints. It will allow the jaw to find its best position because the splint prevents the teeth from locking together, which reduces load on jaw muscles and teeth. It should help you feel more comfortable and allow healing to occur while stabilizing the jaw joint. To obtain its maximum benefit, use it in the following manner:

- Do not bite down on your appliance. The appliance is to help you realize when you are clenching and help you break this habit. **YOUR TEETH SHOULD NEVER TOUCH THE APPLIANCE!** Constantly monitor your jaw position and remember to keep your tongue up and your teeth off the appliance.
- Most patients need to gradually increase the amount of time they wear their appliance until they reach their recommended wear schedule. Occasionally the appliance may cause a temporary increase in jaw tension or joint noises; a slower increase in wear time may be necessary. If your appliance hurts your teeth or gums, leave it out and come back to have it adjusted.
- When you take your appliance out, your jaw may take a few seconds to adjust back to the way your teeth normally fit together.

WHAT TO EXPECT INITIALLY

- Some patients find their appliance causes them to salivate, while others find it causes them to have a dry mouth. This is generally only a temporary situation and should subside after continued use.
- When the appliance is placed, it may feel tight for a few minutes, this is normal. It will feel snug against the teeth, but not too tight or uncomfortable. It should not rub the gums.
- The jaw position will be unusual at first, but after a few days you will become used to the position. Pain, if it was a symptom should subside.

HOW TO CLEAN YOUR APPLIANCE

- The splint needs to be kept clean, just as your own natural teeth.
- Clean the inside and outside of your appliance with a soft toothbrush and anti-bacterial hand soap for a minute before and after each use. Do not use toothpaste to clean. (Bad breath and taste will result from inadequate cleaning)
- If you are not going to wear your splint for a prolonged period of time, store in a moist environment – put a few drops of water in a ziplock bag or airtight container. Please keep your splint protected, it can break.

DO NOT

- **Do NOT** wear your appliance when you are eating.
- **Do NOT** clench or continuously bite down on splint.
- **Do NOT** soak your splint in mouthwash or certain denture cleaning agents. The acrylic is porous and will absorb the color.
- **DO NOT** place splint in hot water or in a warm place (i.e. inside your car on a warm day). This may cause your splint to warp.
- **DO NOT** wear splint during sporting activities, this is not a sports mouthguard.
- **DO NOT** let it lay around; dogs and cats enjoy chewing on them.

ALWAYS

- **ALWAYS** take your appliance to your dental appointments, especially to the initial appointments where we will be refining our appliance. It is important that we check the bite on your splint, which (to protect your teeth) is intentionally made material that wears down over time. That means the bite will have to be periodically adjusted.
- **NOTIFY** the office if your bite feels off, if your pain is not reduced and/or you are having an increase in pain, if splint feels loose and/or keeps falling out or if you notice any cracks or damage.

Loss or breakage from incorrect use is not covered by Wimberley Dental Center. The advice above should help you optimize the benefit you can obtain from your appliance and assist in maintaining your oral health.