

Features of a Good Mouth Guard for Children

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Complete protective guards are designed to completely cover the upper or lower teeth, from the tip of the tooth to the junction of the gums. This type of guard does not change the way children chew and their only purpose is to prevent the teeth from grinding against each other. When this device is placed in the mouth, all the teeth come in contact with it. This method can be a conservative and safe choice for a nightguard, which is used more than any other method.

Sporting accidents are one of the most common causes of dental injury among children. Every year, thousands of young children and adolescents are suffering from dental injuries that could be prevented by wearing a mouthguard. Wearing a mouth protector while playing contact sports can significantly reduce the risk of injuries to children's teeth and jaws including broken teeth, tooth loss, soft tissue injuries, and broken jaws. In other words, a mouth guard decreases the impact or blow to the face.

With regards to tooth loss, or tooth eruption, the mouth guard will no longer fit. Therefore, it will need to be replaced every 12 to 18 months.

What injuries does a mouth guard protect?

Regardless of type, mouth protectors help prevent injury to the mouth, teeth, lips, cheeks, and tongue. In other words, they protect a child from tooth fractures, chipping, tooth-breaking, tooth replacement, soft tissue injuries, and concussions. They also act as a cushion to prevent the impact on the face that may lead to jaw fractures. Because facial injuries can damage orthodontic braces or other orthodontic appliances, children need to use suitable mouth guards.

What are the main features of a properly fitted mouthguard?

A good mouthguard should have the following characteristics:

- Durable
- Comfortable and at the same time fit teeth
- Stay good in the mouth
- Easy to clean
- Do not interfere with breathing and swallowing
- Do not disturb speech

- Do not close the airways
- The guard should be thick enough, about 4 mm, to protect the teeth from pressure and force.

Finally, a few points should keep in mind:

- Sport, leisure, games, and recreation activities are the most common cause of dental injuries in children and adolescents.
- A mouthguard, custom-fitted by the dentist, is considered to provide the best protection for the teeth, lips, and jaws.
- The cost of an injury to the teeth or jaw far exceeds the cost of a custom-fitted mouthguard.

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