

SIGNATURE DENTAL
Family Dentistry

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OCCLUSAL SPLINT (NIGHTGUARD) THERAPY

WHAT IS IT: An occlusal splint (nightguard) is a clear plastic appliance that fits over the biting surface of the teeth of one jaw. It is made to fit either the upper or lower jaw, depending on your mouth.

HOW IT WORKS: By wearing the splint, tooth-to-tooth contact is eliminated. If you grind your teeth at night, you will wear down the plastic instead of your teeth. By keeping your teeth apart, your jaw joint and muscles are able to remain properly aligned and relaxed. This will in turn reduce temporomandibular joint (TMJ) pain and discomfort.

WHEN TO WEAR IT: If you grind/clench your teeth (bruxism), you should wear your splint while sleeping. If you have severe joint discomfort, then the splint can be worn 24 hours a day. As the symptoms diminish, you can decrease the wear time. Eventually you may no longer need the splint.

INSERTING/REMOVING IT: Line up the splint with your front teeth and seat this part first. The back should snap into place with finger pressure. **Never** place it in your mouth and bite to seat it. When removing it, place your finger under the back first and lift up. If the appliance becomes too tight to insert/remove, then heat it up by running it under some lukewarm-hot water for a few seconds.

CLEANING: Brush it with your toothbrush and toothpaste daily. **Avoid** all commercial cleaners (Polident, Efferdent or Listerine) as they will shorten the appliance's life.

GENERAL INFORMATION: You can expect your jaw to be sore for the first few nights of wear. The feeling of tightness on your teeth will dissipate after a week of taking it in and out. If after a week, jaw discomfort persists or a tooth or teeth are sore, return to the office for an adjustment. **Always** bring your nightguard in whenever any dental work is being done on your mouth.

KEEP THE APPLIANCE AWAY FROM PETS!