

Post-Operative Instructions for Occlusal Guard (Nightguard)

Congratulations on taking a significant step towards protecting your teeth and jaw from the effects of grinding or clenching. Following these instructions will ensure your occlusal guard serves its purpose effectively:

Immediately After Fitting

- **Getting Used to It:** It's normal for your new occlusal guard to feel unfamiliar at first. Try wearing it for short periods during the day to **get accustomed to the fit before using it overnight**.
- **Speech and Comfort:** You may find speaking a little challenging or experience an unusual sensation initially. This is typical and will improve as you adjust to wearing the guard.

Daily Use and Maintenance

- **Rinsing:** Always rinse your occlusal guard with **cold water** before and after each use. This helps to remove debris and maintain hygiene.
- **Cleaning:** Brush your occlusal guard daily using a **soft toothbrush**. It's important to keep it clean to avoid bacterial buildup.
- **Storage:** After rinsing and drying, store your occlusal guard in its **designated case**, which should be kept dry and clean.

Adjustments and Comfort

- **Muscle Relaxation:** It's normal for your **bite to feel slightly uncalibrated** or "off" in the morning after wearing the guard, especially if you're a severe clencher or grinder. This sensation should disappear within about 30 minutes as your chewing muscles relax and reprogram to their natural position.

What to Avoid

- **Soaking:** *Never soak your occlusal guard in water or denture cleaner.* This can cause the material to deteriorate and affect the fit.
- **Sunlight Exposure:** Do not leave your occlusal guard in direct sunlight, as *UV rays can alter the shape* and effectiveness of the guard.
- **Pets and Children:** Keep the *guard out of reach of pets and children*, particularly dogs, who may chew or damage it.
- **Eating:** *Never wear your occlusal guard while eating.* This can be painful and may cause damage to the guard or your teeth.
- **Sleeping Position:** Try to *avoid sleeping on your stomach.* This position can force your head to the side, potentially causing additional muscular strain.

Regular Use

- **Inserting and Removing:** Carefully place and remove the guard using your fingers—*avoid biting it into place.* This helps maintain the shape and fit of the guard.
- **Nightly Wear:** For maximum protection, wear your occlusal guard every night. This *consistency is key* to preventing damage from clenching or grinding.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink water before bed to combat dry mouth, a common side effect of wearing mouthguards.
- **Regular Checks:** Inspect your guard regularly for signs of wear or damage. Minor scratches are expected, but if the guard shows significant deterioration, contact us.
- **Dental Appointments:** Bring your occlusal guard to regular dental cleaning appointments for professional inspection and cleaning.

When to Contact Us

- If your occlusal guard feels uncomfortable, too tight, too loose, or if it's causing additional muscle or jaw soreness, stop using it and contact us for an adjustment.

By following these aftercare instructions, you can ensure your occlusal guard serves its purpose effectively, providing you with long-term protection and comfort. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at **571-210-2771**.