

PEDIATRIC SERIES

Mouthguards

The importance of mouthguards

You probably know that mouthguards are mandatory for high-contact sports like football and hockey. What you may not know is that the majority of mouth injuries occur in children between the ages of seven and fourteen, while they are engaged in casual sports and other common activities like skateboarding or riding a bike.

Any activity that could result in a fall or a blow to the head puts your child at risk for mouth injuries. Lost or broken teeth are the most common kind of mouth injury, but accidents may also cause concussions, jaw bone fractures and dislocations, as well as damage to orthodontic appliances and the jaw joint. Fortunately, mouthguards can help protect your children from these expensive and painful injuries.



A broken tooth



An unformed boil-and-bite guard



Custom guards are best

Different kinds of mouthguards

The three common types of mouthguards are:

- Stock mouthguards
- Boil-and-bite mouthguards
- Custom-made mouthguards

Stock mouthguards are used off-the-shelf with no modifications and offer little or no protection. Boil-and-bite mouthguards fit somewhat better because they are molded to the child's teeth, but they are not thick enough to provide the necessary support for the teeth and jaw.

Custom-made mouthguards are by far your best choice, because:

- They offer maximum protection.
- Their fit is more precise.
- They allow breathing or speaking with minimal interference.
- They're more durable and comfortable.

How we create a custom-made mouthguard

To fabricate a custom-made mouthguard, we take impressions of the mouth during the first appointment. We use the impressions to make models, and a dental laboratory uses the models to create the mouthguard. During the second appointment, we make slight adjustments to the mouthguard to ensure that it's comfortable.

Each year, millions of children's teeth are knocked out as a result of accidents during everyday activities like skateboarding and biking. A custom-made mouthguard is a great way to prevent injury and protect your child's smile.