



ABSOLUTE
ORTHODONTIC SERVICES

OCCLUSAL SPLINT APPLIANCE

WHAT IS IT FOR?

An occlusal splint is a removable appliance made of acrylic /resin that covers all the biting surfaces of upper or lower teeth. It is indicated for patients who have jaw /muscle pain or headaches; temporomandibular disorders (TMD) or patients who display excessive wear of their teeth from clenching or grinding (bruxism). 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 & teeth.

It is a device that is often designed to be worn while you sleep.

An occlusal splint can also be called or referred to as a **dental splint**, a **bite splint** or a **night guard**.

ADVANTAGES and BENEFITS

An occlusal splint aims to help protect your teeth and their supporting structures, from damage which can be caused by clenching and/or grinding of the teeth, a condition known as **bruxing**. Bruxing is an involuntary habit that often people do while they are sleeping. Bruxing can cause significant and irreversible damage to the teeth and their supporting structures. As bruxing puts the teeth under immense stress and force.

An Occlusal splint protects natural teeth from further wear & prevent further cracking of teeth.

Protects restorations, resin fillings or Build-ups, Crowns, Bridges or Implant restorations.

Relieves jaw joint pain, muscle aches in jaw, jaw/muscle related headaches/neck pain.

Stabilises jaw joint Promotes jaw relaxation in patients with stress -related pain symptoms.

WHAT ARE OCCLUSAL SPLINTS MADE FROM

Occlusal splints are mainly made from acrylic. Most splints are clear, helping to make them discrete when worn.

WHEN TO WEAR I

Your Orthodontist or Dentist will provide you with instructions specific to your personal needs.

If you are aware that you grind at night then you are likely to be advised to wear the splint at night while you sleep to prevent this. If you are experiencing pain in the morning on awakening again this is a sign of night-time clenching so again you wear at night until symptoms subside. If you find you are clenching during the day then, daytime use might be advised. If you are getting pain in jaw joints or muscles during the day then daytime use is indicated. Some patients require full time use during initial phases to get pain to subside.

WHAT TO EXPECT INITIALLY

Excess saliva for a few days, this normally subsides after a week or two of continued use.

The splint will likely feel tight initially 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 become used to the new position. Pain if it was a symptom should subside. Altered speech should return to normal if using it during the day as the tongue adjusts to new position.

WHEN TO REMOVE

Do not wear whilst eating, it is not designed for this.

Remove while cleaning your teeth.

Not to be worn during sporting activities as it is not a sports mouthguard.

CLEANING & STORAGE

Maintaining Your Splint Remove your splint in the morning and then rinse it in cold water only. Heat can distort and hence ruin your splint. Clean the outside and inside lightly with a toothbrush. You may disinfect your splint using denture or mouthguard cleaner in cold water only. Good tooth brushing and flossing of your own teeth is also very important. Use your storage case to store your occlusal splint. You can store it dry. Do not store it in alcohol or alcohol-based products.

MAINTENANCE

Keep appointments for review or adjustments of occlusal splint. Bring along to EVERY DENTAL APPOINTMENT so this can be checked & adjusted as required. Do not keep wearing unless you are having the periodic 6 monthly appointments so it can be checked it is fitting/working properly.

WHEN TO CONTACT DENTAL CLINIC

If pain is not reducing in jaw joints after a several days of continued use. The bite is not comfortable. It feels too loose & keeps falling out.

If you notice any cracks or damage.

DO NOT

Clench or continuously bite down on mouthguard

Soak in Dettol/denture cleaning agents /alcohol based mouthwash for long periods

Use toothpaste to clean

Place in hot water

Leave out in direct sunlight

Carry in pocket without being in protective case

Leave out for the dog to chew!