



Night Guard

Bruxism is also known as grinding and/or clenching of your teeth. Most of the time patients are not aware of this until a sleeping partner lets them know, or if you have any of the following symptoms you may be experiencing bruxism:

- Rhythmic contractions of the jaw muscles
- A grinding sound at night
- Jaw muscles that are tight or painful
- Long-lasting pain in the face
- Swelling (occasionally) on the side of your lower jaw caused by clenching²

Other Treatments for Teeth Grinding

- If a night guard is uncomfortable, there are other possible treatments listed below that you can ask your dentist about:
- Teeth straightening: Teeth that are out of alignment--what dentists call “malocclusion”--can contribute to teeth grinding. This can be remedied by corrective measures such as braces.
- Stress prevention: One of the main causes of bruxism is anxiety, so your dentist might advise you to utilize one or more at-home methods of relaxation, like meditation, or in some cases professional counseling, to get you to relax and stop clenching your jaw.
- Change of diet or medication: Your dentist might recommend avoiding stimulants, such as caffeine, to reduce teeth grinding. Certain medications, such as antidepressants, might also contribute to the issue, so make sure you tell your dentist about any medications you are taking so he can suggest an alternative if one is warranted.
- Sleep Apnea: Most recent studies are allowing dentists to screen patients for a serious condition called Obstructive Sleep Apnea. Clenching/Grinding your teeth can be a result of this underlying disease, which left untreated, can contribute to high blood pressure and risk for a stroke or heart attack. Talk to your Primary Care Physician if you don't feel comfortable discussing this with your dentist.

The most important thing to know about bruxism is that it can be treated or the underlying cause can be established. Ask your dentist about this at your next visit!