

Splint information & Consent form

An occlusal splint is a device designed to suppress jaw muscle contraction (i.e., clenching and grinding) and provide protection to the teeth as well as the jaw joint.

Patients can be prescribed splints for several reasons, and as such, there are several designs for splints. The most common ones are shown below.

- Simple splints designed just to protect teeth and restorations from wear e.g.: dual laminate splints
- Splints designed to reduce contractions of jaw muscles and hence providing facial pain relief e.g.: B-splints and SCI appliances
- Splints designed to stabilise the jaw joint, relax the jaw muscles, and provide an ideal occlusion (bite) during the night. These splints are the most complex of splints and are known as Stabilisation Splints e.g.: Michigan and Tanner appliances

Clenching and grinding of teeth (Bruxism) at night-time is an incredibly common behaviour amongst adults. Research has shown that it is often related to stressful/busy lifestyles and individuals with specific personality traits. During your dental check-up, your dentist would have assessed the masticatory system (jaw joint, jaw muscles and teeth). If any parts of the masticatory system are showing signs of wear, you could benefit from wearing an occlusal splint at night-time. This will potentially protect the jaw joint and muscles from stress and strain as well as protecting the teeth. This could prevent the fracturing of teeth and restorations inside the mouth.

Irrespective of the type of occlusal appliance you have been prescribed, as a patient you should be aware of the following:

- Wear the appliance(s) as prescribed by your dentist.
- Never wear an occlusal appliance while eating or for more than 8 hours a day.
- Appliance use should be discontinued if: It is uncomfortable, damaged, too tight, or too loose.
- Most occlusal splints suppress muscle dysfunctions. Your teeth may feel like they don't meet perfectly in the morning. However, daily chewing should maintain each tooth's original position.
- Tooth movement occurs naturally over time. Therefore, if your splint hasn't been worn for a while, it may not fit correctly and may need to be adjusted by your dentist.

- With the use of any dental appliance, over time the way that your teeth bite together may change. This is an incredibly rare event and is likely related to the jaw muscles fully relaxing. If this occurs and you are at all concerned, you should discuss this with your dentist. It should be noted that most bite changes, should they occur, do not cause problems with function.
- Pre-existing jaw joint noises e.g., clicking are not necessarily indicative of pathology or disease but may be permanent adaptive conditions to historical muscle dysfunction or trauma. An occlusal splint may allow the degree of 'loudness' to decrease or resolve completely.
- Complete resolution of your symptoms may not occur immediately. Typically, the jaw's range of motion improves, therefore your dentist may need to adjust or modify your device as the condition adapts.
- Occlusal splints are prescribed to combat bruxism (teeth grinding and/ or clenching). Therefore, it is prone to wear and tear and there is no guarantee of its longevity.

Patient declaration

The Splint procedure has been explained to me fully and I have had the opportunity to consider all the risks and benefits of the treatment. I have read this consent form in my own time and I am happy to proceed with the planned treatment.

Signature:

Print name:

Date: