

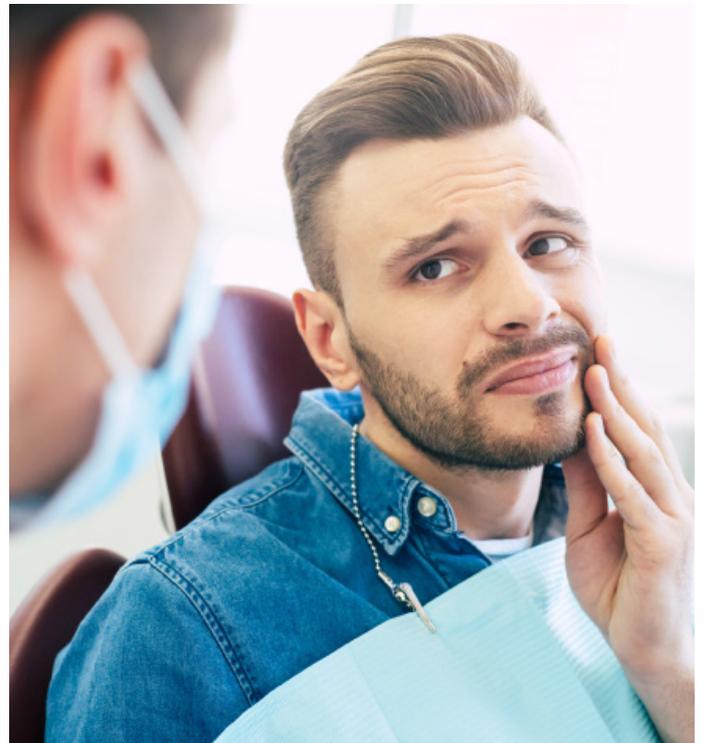
CLENCHING AND GRINDING HABITS

Clenching and grinding are common problems amongst the population. Some people are very aware that they do this, but others have no idea until their dentist informs them, however evidence inside their mouth, will indicate that this type of habit is occurring. People will do this mainly when they sleep, however some do clench during the day as well. A lot of this has been linked to stress, either at home or at work.

CLENCHING/GRINDING

This can cause a number of symptoms:

- ▶ TOOTH WEAR
- ▶ SENSITIVE TEETH TO HOT AND COLD
- ▶ HEADACHES
- ▶ MIGRAINES
- ▶ GUM RECESSION
- ▶ TOOTH AND FILLING FRACTURES
- ▶ JAW JOINT ACHE, MUSCLE ACHE/TENDERNESS
- ▶ JAW JOINT POPPING/CRUNCHING
- ▶ STIFF NECK AND SHOULDERS



Clenching and grinding are common problems amongst the population.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND IT

When clenching/grinding occurs, the back teeth (molars) meet and send a signal to the muscles that close your jaw together to work very hard. This unnecessary over working of the muscles at night causes a build up of lactic acid and other harmful chemicals inside the muscle tissue. This sets the foundation for a headache and potentially a migraine later on in the day.

The trigger for this migraine will be your normal one e.g.

- ▶ Alcohol
- ▶ Chocolate
- ▶ Stress
- ▶ Light
- ▶ Concentration on computers

If we can prevent the molar teeth from meeting in the night, then a lot of the symptoms will disappear by up to 75%. So if you were going to be getting a bad migraine then the wearing the guards may decrease this to a light headache.

THE HARD NIGHT GUARD WITH SLIDE BAR

This appliance (sleep clench inhibitor) fits over the front top and bottom 6-8 teeth only.

It prevents the molar teeth from meeting so the muscles that close your jaw only work to 10-20% of their capacity. This means only 10-20% of the harmful chemicals are produced and thus symptoms are reduced markedly and a lot of the time, they disappear altogether.

They will take some getting used to, so we advise wearing them during the day initially so that your brain gets used to it for the night.

If looked after properly, the guards last 2-3 years, so renewing your guard is something you will need to bear in mind. Better to wear the night guard out rather than your teeth!

If you find yourself clenching/grinding during the day then a soft day splint can be provided as well. This guard is not visible to work colleagues or friends.

Where tooth wear has been excessive, then Full Mouth Rehabilitation (FMR) may be required to maintain function (eating), appearance and to correct the alignment of your jaw.



For more information, please visit

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