

## **The Nightly Grind: Knowing When to Invest in a Night Guard** ***Teeth protection at night can lead to better sleep, healthier teeth and less headaches***

**SEATTLE – Dec. 13, 2023** – While mouth guards are nearly ubiquitous in the mouths of athletes, more and more people are taking similar steps to protect their teeth as part of their everyday lives in the form of night guards. Knowing when you need a night guard or not, though, isn't always obvious.

If you've been waking up with a sore jaw or if your dentist notices signs of teeth grinding – known as bruxism -- or if you are under a lot of stress and anxiety, or even depending on what type of medicine you take, can lead to issues with your mouth which can often be corrected by wearing a night guard.

“Night guards are a great appliance to help minimize the effects of bruxism, including tooth chipping or other damage caused by grinding and clenching,” said Kyle Dosch, DDS, Delta Dental of Washington's dental director and member dentist.

If bruxism is left untreated it can lead to jaw problems, tooth loss, and damage to your cheeks. If a dentist diagnoses you with bruxism, they may suggest you use a night guard to help alleviate further damage.

### **Benefits to wearing a night guard**

Wearing a night guard can help not only help treat your bruxism, but it has a host of other benefits:

**Protects your teeth:** Night guards can stop damage to your teeth before it starts, including damage to fillings, cracking or chipping teeth.

**Prevents headaches:** People with bruxism can get frequent headaches because of the pressure of grinding or clenching their teeth all night long, causing pressure.

**Less jaw pain:** Grinding your teeth takes work. You use your jaw muscles, and all that activity at night can cause you to wake up with jaw pain.

Night guards can be custom-made at the dentist office or purchased over the counter at your local drugstore. Over-the-counter night guards come in two types as well. You can buy a one-size-fits-all type which you put on directly out of the box or you can buy a boil-and-bite version, which helps create a moderately customized version.

Your best choice is the custom-made option. Your dentist will make a night guard using impressions of your teeth. This means it will fit your mouth better than a store-bought version. While custom-made night guards are more expensive, they also last longer and are often more comfortable than over-the-counter versions. Delta Dental of Washington's Plus Ortho Plan covers night guards provided by a dentist.

For more information about your oral health, visit Delta Dental of Washington's [blog](#). For more information about Delta Dental of Washington's plans that cover night guards, visit their [website](#).

### **About Delta Dental of Washington**

Founded 70 years ago by Seattle area dentists who set out to revolutionize oral health care, an innovative program was developed to provide longshoremen's children access to dental care – and the concept of dental benefits was born. Today [Delta Dental of Washington](#), a not-for-profit, is the state's leading dental benefits provider covering nearly 4 million people statewide and beyond.

Through corporate philanthropy, oral health advocacy, and funding the [Arcora Foundation](#), Delta Dental of Washington plays a vital role in making dental care more equitable and accessible, increasing dental health education with an emphasis on youth, and expanding diversity at all levels within the dental profession. These collective efforts aim to improve oral health care in Washington so all people can enjoy good oral and overall health with no one left behind. Delta Dental of Washington is part of the Delta Dental Plans Association, consisting of 39 independent, affiliated member companies. For more information, visit: [www.deltadentalwa.com](http://www.deltadentalwa.com).

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