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Answers to commonly asked sports mouthguard questions:

What is a sports mouthguard?

A removable dental appliance that fits over the upper teeth. Acts as a shock absorber to prevent injury to the jaw and mouth during sports activities.

Is a sports mouthguard necessary for non contact sports?

Yes. Examples of injuries from non contact sports include:

1. Blow to the face and mouth from baseball equipment
2. Jaw and teeth injury caused by severe clenching of teeth in weight lifting
3. Inadvertent contact in basketball.

Do any sports associations have mandatory policies for sports mouthguards?

Sports mouthguards are mandatory in Canada in most minor hockey leagues, amateur football, amateur rugby, karate, taekwondo, lacrosse and amateur and professional boxing.

Are there different types of sports mouthguards?

There are four types of sports mouthguards.

1. Stock: “One size fits all” are available commercially in stores. Requires wearer to clench teeth together to hold it in place. Bulkiness makes it difficult to speak and breathe when wearing. Least expensive and offers least protection
2. Mouth formed: “Boil and bite”. Available

commercially. Better fit, less bulky than stock type but may still require wearer to clench teeth to hold it in place. Impedes speech and breathing. Economical to purchase and slightly better protection than stock type.

3. Custom fabricated: Created from an impression of teeth taken by a dental hygienist to fit the wearer’s mouth perfectly. Comfortable, allows wearer to speak and breathe properly. Superior protection to #1 and #2, but more expensive
4. Pressure laminated: Custom fit from an impression of the teeth taken by a dental hygienist and manufactured in a dental laboratory. Highest level of protection, fit and comfort, but most expensive.

What are the characteristics of a properly fitted sports mouthguard?

1. Durable, at least 3 mm thickness to keep the jaws separated.
2. Comfortable, snug fit.
3. Wearer can speak and breathe easily.

Do sports mouthguards prevent concussion?

There is no clear evidence to prove that the use of sports mouthguards prevents concussion but research is ongoing.

Do sports mouthguards wear out?

Sports mouthguards last for two to three seasons of play, depending on the frequency of use. Replace if torn, thin or worn out.