

# Bruxism

## The Crux of Bruxism

Some patients react to stress by grinding their teeth unconsciously during the day or, more commonly, while sleeping. The constant pressure and motion can harm teeth, as well as muscles and tissues in and around the jaw. The condition, known as Bruxism, can be remedied with a nightguard.

## The Facts About Clenching and Grinding

Common symptoms of Bruxism include a sore jaw, headaches, or earaches. Causes vary, but may include stress, anxiety, tension, misaligned teeth, posture, diet, sleeping habits, and other factors. Bruxism is most prevalent in women and generally found in about one-third of the population.

Individuals who react to stress with anger, pain, frustration, aggression, or competition are most commonly affected. People with bruxism may have other biting habits, such as biting fingernails, pencils, lips, or the insides of their cheeks.

Constant clenching and grinding of the teeth cannot only cause the aforementioned symptoms, but it may also contribute to TMJ (temporomandibular joint) dysfunction, which has a long list of side effects associated with pain in the head and neck. Teeth rubbing together consistently will result in surface wear over time, which will cause dental problems. Insomnia, eating

disorders, and depression can result from Bruxism (if left untreated).

## A Solid Solution

How can you stop an unconscious habit? A thorough evaluation will allow us to check your teeth, tissues, and muscles. If we determine that you suffer from Bruxism, we'll create an orthotic appliance, also called a nightguard or splint, to prevent grinding and clenching. Many types of nightguards exist, and patients react differently to the various styles. If one appliance does not work, another may. In many cases, simply wearing a nightguard will eliminate the problem. However, if the condition persists, we can prescribe alternative therapies to correct the issue.

Some practices that can relieve symptoms of Bruxism include stress and anxiety management, focused facial relaxation, massage and stretching of face and neck muscles, applying ice or wet heat, proper rest, eating soft foods, and hydrating the body. If your teeth were damaged because of Bruxism, or if we find TMJ to be a factor, our team will repair and treat you to provide complete relief.