

SKYLINE DENTAL, LLC

OFFICE NEWSLETTER

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DENTAL NEWS & INFORMATION

BRUXING AND TMJ DISORDERS

(Excerpts from the American Dental Association & Academy of General Dentistry Website)

ARE YOU GRINDING YOUR TEETH?

Bruxism is the habit of grinding or clenching the teeth. Clenching means you tightly hold your top and bottom teeth together. Grinding occurs when you slide your teeth back and forth over each other.

There are a few symptoms that are characteristic of bruxism. People who suffer from bruxism may experience:

- > Headache
- > Sore Jaw
- > Facial Pain
- > Loose Teeth
- > Insomnia
- > Worn or Fractured Teeth
- > Earache
- > Frequent Toothaches
- > Clicking or Popping jaws
- > Clenching or Grinding Teeth

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP BRUXISM?

Bruxism can develop at any age, and children as well as adults can have the habit of grinding their teeth. Although the causes of bruxism are not certain, several factors may be involved. Stressful situations, sleep disorders, an abnormal bite, and crooked or missing teeth may be responsible.

The dentist can diagnose bruxism by looking for unusual wear spots on your teeth. Regular dental checkups are important to detect damage in the early stages. Irregular wear on teeth and facial pain can be prevented and treated.

HOW IS BRUXISM TREATED?

Depending on what is causing the bruxism, the Dentist may recommend a few different options.

If stress is the major cause of bruxism, we would recommend you find ways to relax. Reading a book, listening to quiet music, taking a walk or a warm bath may help. You also may be asked to apply a warm washcloth or compress to the side of your face to help the muscles in your face relax. Practicing relaxation techniques may also be helpful. If you have difficulty handling stress, counseling may help direct you to more effective ways of dealing with stressful situations.

We may also suggest a night-guard to wear while you sleep. Night-guards are helpful for bruxism caused by sleep disorders, crooked or missing teeth or stress. Custom-made specifically for your mouth, the night-guard slips over the top or bottom teeth and helps prevent contact and wear between them. It also helps relieve some of the pressure of grinding or clenching, which can minimize facial and muscular pain and wear or damage to the delicate jaw joints.

Treatment for those with an abnormal bite may involve a referral to an Orthodontist or reducing the "high spots" on one or more teeth.

TMJ DISORDERS

The Temporomandibular Joint is the 'hinge' joint that opens and closes your mouth. There are various problems and

disorders that can affect the proper function and comfort of this joint.

CAUSES OF TMJ DISORDERS

- o Injuries to the jaw or head
- o Diseases of the muscles or joints, such as Arthritis
- o Bite problems (teeth do not fit together properly)
- o Stress

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF TMJ DISORDERS

- o Pain in or around the ear
- o Tender jaw muscles
- o Clicking or popping noises in the jaw
- o Difficulty opening or closing the mouth
- o Pain when yawning or chewing
- o Jaw joints that feel as if they are "locked" or "stuck"
- o Headaches

TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR TMJ DISORDERS

Treatment may involve a series of steps. The step-by-step plan allows you to try simple treatment before moving on to more involved treatment. The "less is often best" approach is the preferred method of treating TMJ disorders.

The following self-care practices may be recommended and helpful:

- o Eating softer foods
- o Avoiding chewing gum, biting your nails or cheeks
- o Modifying the pain with heat packs
- o Practicing relaxation techniques to control jaw tension

If necessary for your symptoms, the following treatment may be advised:

- o Exercises to strengthen and relax your jaw muscles and referral to a Physical Therapist
- o Medications such as muscle relaxants or anti-inflammatories to minimize the discomfort and pain associated with the joint
- o A night guard or bite splint to decrease clenching or grinding of teeth
- o Referral to an Orthodontist for evaluation and possible correction of your bite
- o Referral to an Oral Surgeon for evaluation and possible treatment of the cartilage or articular disk that protects and helps in the movement of your jaw.

OFFICE NEWS & HAPPENINGS

Your Child's Dental Health

Regular visits to the Dentist help reinforce good brushing, flossing and other healthy oral habits for children. We can start seeing kids as soon as their teeth appear; to discuss proper care of the teeth, diet/nutrition, prevention and fluoride. We love treating kids and many of the parents currently in our practice, started off as kids in our practice ☺. Feel free to bring your youngsters along with you for your cleaning appointments, so they can get comfortable and see for themselves that going to the dentist can be easy and fun.

\$20 Gift Certificates for your Referrals

As a token of appreciation to our existing patients, we will be mailing a Gift Certificate good for a *\$20 credit at our office*; when a New Patient to our office lists your name as the referral source to our dental practice.

We appreciate our existing patients and would welcome your extended family and friends into our practice. Feel free to refer your family and friends to our website (www.SkylineDentalLLC.com) for an overview of our practice, services and policies.

Please check with our Front Office for additional details about our Referral Appreciation Credit.