

Bruxism/Grinding your teeth

What is Bruxism and How to Stop Grinding Your Teeth

You may not be familiar with the term "bruxism," but you're undoubtedly familiar with the behavior. Bruxism is the grinding, gnashing, or clenching of teeth. Many of us do it without even realizing; in fact, a lot of people do it in their sleep, which is called sleep bruxism.

Regardless of whether you know the name, it's important to understand the consequences of bruxism and how it can impact your dental health.

What is Bruxism?

Bruxism is a broad term used to encompass a number of behaviors, including:

- Gnashing of teeth
 - Grinding of teeth
 - Clenching of teeth
 - Gritting of teeth
 - Any of these behaviors during sleep
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Is Teeth Grinding Harmful?

There's no doubt that there can be harmful effects of teeth grinding. Here's a look at the potential consequences:

Teeth Grinding Effects

Teeth grinding effects can range from mild annoyances to serious problems that require a dental professional's attention. The big concern among dentists is bruxism's cumulative effect: It's not one day of clenching or gnashing that's the problem, it's the years of this behavior that wear down your teeth, sparking the need for serious dental treatment. Side effects include:

- Loosening of teeth from the gums
 - Losing of teeth
 - Fracturing of teeth
 - Wearing away of teeth and enamel
 - Receding gums
 - Aching jaws
 - Recurring headaches
 - Tooth pain
 - Developing jaw joint disorders
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Why Do People Grind Their Teeth?

Stress and Anxiety

People develop nervous, repetitive conditions during times of high stress that they use to relieve some of their tension. For some, it's yanking on their hair; for others, it's nail biting. For many, that tension tamer is grinding teeth. In fact, studies have shown that [up to 70 percent of bruxism is triggered by stress](#). Job troubles spark much of that anxiety, though coping techniques also play a role. A person with a good outlet for their stress, such as exercise or therapy, is less likely to develop bruxism.



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How can we treat Bruxism and grinding your teeth?

Custom Night Guards



Custom mouth
guards are the
best solution
for nightly
teeth grinding

Night guards are mouth guards that are worn at night to guard against teeth grinding. They are different from mouth guards worn during athletics. The idea is that people will continue to grind their teeth at night, but by using a mouth guard, they avoid damaging their teeth, because the guard takes the brunt of the grinding.

There are two types of night guards. The first is a custom night guard made by a dentist, who will measure your mouth and teeth and build a guard to those specifications. That guard cannot be used by anyone else, because it will not fit properly. Custom night guards are often the smarter choice in protecting against bruxism, because they account for your unique mouth shape and circumstances. You can also buy a non-custom night guard at a drug store. These may fit less comfortably, because they aren't designed with your mouth in mind. Still, they shield the teeth from the worst of the night grinding. Some dentists even recommend night guards for people who do not currently suffer from bruxism, as these guards protect the mouth from any sort of night trauma. They view the guards as insurance for your dental work.