



WHY CUSTOM FABRICATED SPORTS MOUTHGUARDS?

By Dr. Evan Lyle Berson

ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN DENTAL Association, more than 200,000 oral injuries are prevented annually in this country by sports mouthguards. While this is an impressive preventative figure, unfortunately the National Youth Sports Foundation estimates that more than five million teeth will be knocked out in sporting activities this year. These oral traumas will happen to children,

high school and college level athletes. In fact, dental injuries are the most common type of orofacial injury sustained during participation in sports.

The benefits of sports mouthguard protection have been well documented. In 1995, Dr. Raymond Flander's study on the high incidence of oral injuries showed that in football, where mouthguards are mandatory, only .07 percent of all injuries involved teeth and the oral cavity. Conversely, in basketball where mouthguards are not worn, 34 percent of all injuries to players involved teeth and/or the oral cavity! Obviously dental injuries could also be significantly reduced if children, teenagers and adults involved in the following sports wore custom fabricated mouthguards: soccer, volleyball, baseball, softball, rollerblading, lacrosse, skateboarding, martial arts, boxing, hockey, kickboxing, football, basketball, wrestling and mountain biking.

Custom Made Mouth Guards	Stock Bite and Boil Mouthguards
Fit comfortably	Uncomfortable
Accurate fit	Moves around in the mouth
Easy to speak	Hard to speak
Athletes want to wear it	Compliance is low
Customized thickness for each sport	One size fits all
Easy to breathe while wearing	Hard to breathe thus inhibiting athletics
Customized team colors	One color fits all
As the chart clearly shows, a custom fabricated mouthguard is the best fit for all athletes, whether you are serious about your sports or just out having fun.	

The Costs of Sports Related Oral Injuries....

According to Dr. Ray Padilla, an active member in the Academy for Sports Dentistry, the lifetime dental rehabilitation costs can approach several thousand dollars per tooth, for the child or athlete who loses a tooth (or teeth) in a sporting injury. This does not include the associated costs of hours in the dental office and the possible development of secondary problems such as periodontal disease. The total rehabilitation costs for a single knocked out tooth are more than 20 times the preventative cost for a custom laminated professional grade mouthguard.

Types of Sports Mouthguards....

Comparing dentist fabricated custom sports mouthguards with stock or boil and bite type mouth-



This could have been prevented.

guards, typically found in sporting goods stores, reveals significant differences. Boil and bite type mouthguards do not fit as accurately as custom fabricated types so they often are uncomfortable and frequently interfere with the athletes breathing and speaking ability. At the First International Symposium on Dental Biomaterials in August of 1993, Dr. J. Park, Ph.D. reported that boil and bite mouthguards provide a false sense of protection due to the dramatic decrease in thickness when the athlete bites it into place during its softened state. Dr. Park further stated that unless dramatic improvements are made, they (boil and bite mouthguards) should not be promoted by dentists to their sporting patients.



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