

### Why wear a mouthguard?

Every year, dentists are frustrated by treating dental injuries caused by sporting accidents, due to people not wearing a mouthguard whilst playing contact sport.

Anyone who participates in a sport that carries a risk of a knock to the face should wear a mouthguard.

This includes sports where contact is part of the game like football, boxing and rugby, but also collision sports where contact often happens but is not expected or allowed. These include basketball, hockey, water polo, lacrosse, netball, baseball, softball, squash, soccer, BMX bike riding, horse riding, skateboarding, in-line skating, trampolining, cricket (wicket keeping or batting without a helmet), water skiing and snow ski racing.

### Why you need a mouthguard

A mouthguard helps cushion a blow to the face that otherwise might result in an injury to the mouth or jaw. A stray elbow, a fall or heavy collision can leave you with chipped or broken teeth, internal damage to a tooth, tooth loss and in severe cases, concussion or a broken jaw.

Injuries like this can lead to long and potentially expensive treatment to restore the teeth and mouth back to normal function and appearance.

According to Australian research, sports injuries account for about one-third of traumatic injuries to teeth. The Sports Medicine Association reports that 50% of children experience some form of dental injury.

Statistics like these reinforce the importance of mouthguards.

Mouthguards, which typically cover the upper teeth, cushion a blow to the face, minimizing the risk of broken teeth and injuries to the soft tissues of the mouth. They also help reduce the risk of jaw fractures and concussion.

### When do I wear a mouthguard?

Mouthguards should be worn whilst **playing** and **training** for any sport that could involve contact to the face.

### Other Mouthguard Tips:

- Update your mouthguard every 12 months, to ensure it is fully effective
- Keep your mouthguard clean, stored in a rigid container and away from heat to ensure it maintains its shape

For more information on mouthguards and protecting teeth, people can visit [www.ada.org.au](http://www.ada.org.au) or call the ADA Inc on (02) 9906 4412.

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**For more information about Mouthguard Awareness or to speak with an ADA Inc spokesperson, please contact the Porter Novelli Melbourne:**

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