

TEETH GRINDING (BRUXISM)

Bruxism is a condition in which patients grind or clench their teeth during the day or at night. Many patients do this subconsciously. Bruxism can lead to sleep disorders and damage to teeth. There are treatment options for patients who want to protect themselves.

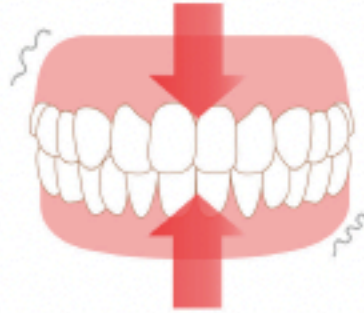


CAUSES:

Patients typically grind their teeth in a response to stress or anxiety. Patients may also unknowingly grind their teeth at night. Tobacco use may be associated with an increased risk of bruxism, as well as taking certain antidepressants. Overly competitive and aggressive personalities are also known to grind their teeth.



GRINDING



CLENCHING



TAPPING

TREATMENT OPTIONS:

Medication

Bruxism can be treated with OTC pain relief and anti-inflammatory medication. Patients may be prescribed a muscle relaxer or low doses of antidepressants.

Temporomandibular Joint Therapy

Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) therapy addresses the issue when patients jaw joints and muscles struggle to make connections properly. Bruxism can lead to and is closely associated with TMJ. There are different options to treat TMJ and bruxism. A popular option is wearing a night guard. This will not stop you from the action of grinding your teeth, however it will protect against further damage. Many dentists offer physical therapy. Patients can strengthen and stretch their jaw which has been known to lessen the effects of TMJ. Some dentists recommend counseling. Due to the fact that many people grind their teeth as a direct result of stress, many patients choose to treat their TMJ by addressing the source.

Oral Surgery

If your bruxism is too severe for orthodontics, your dentist may recommend oral surgery. An oral surgeon may perform injections or joint surgery to attempt to treat grinding, severe bruxism, or TMJ disorders.

