

CARE AND CLEANING OF SPLINTS, MOUTH GUARDS, REMOVABLE RETAINERS, AND SLEEP APNEA APPLIANCES

Mouth guards can be a valuable tool when it comes to protecting your teeth from the harsh effects of grinding or clenching. Your daily oral health routine should include cleaning your mouth guard. Follow these complete instructions for cleaning your guard and it should stay in great shape for years to come.

Rinse immediately after wearing.

Each time you wear your guard you should rinse it with warm water as soon as you remove it from your mouth. This will remove debris and loosen any plaque that is stuck to the guard.

Brush the Guard with your toothbrush.

After rinsing, give your guard a light brushing with your normal toothbrush and baking soda or mild toothpaste. Some people prefer using a separate toothbrush just for their guard, but it's okay if you want to use the toothbrush you use to brush your teeth daily.

Lay your Guard on a clean surface and allow it to dry completely out of reach of small children and pets.

It's important to allow your guard to dry completely before storing it as to prevent rapid bacterial growth. Choose a clean, flat surface to allow your guard to dry. Typically, it should dry within 15-30 minutes.

Always store your Guard in a case.

When you are not wearing your guard, it is important that you keep it stored in a case. Many people store their guard in their bathroom, but over time the steam and humidity in the bathroom can cause the guard to warp. We recommend that you keep the guard stored in your bedroom or on your nightstand instead.

Deep clean your Guard weekly.

Make a habit of deep cleaning your guard as least once a week. This can be done several ways. The first is by using an over-the-counter denture cleaner. Simply place your guard in a glass or bowl with water and allow the cleaner to dissolve completely into the water. The second way to deep clean your guard is by using a mixture of vinegar and hydrogen peroxide. Soak the guard in distilled white vinegar for at least 30 minutes. After soaking, rinse the guard and the bowl with water. Then soak the guard in hydrogen peroxide for at least 30 more minutes. Once finished, rinse with water and allow the guard to dry completely. The final way you can deep clean your guard is to use a mixture of mouthwash and water. Pour a capful of mouthwash into a glass or bowl and then dilute with water until the guard is submerged in the solution. Let your guard soak for about 30 minutes and then rinse the guard and allow it to dry completely on a clean flat surface. Don't ever leave your guard soaking in anything for longer than one hour. Extended time in liquid can damage the material.

Keep your case clean.

Cleaning your guard can become a wasted effort if you put a clean guard into a dirty case. Keep the case clean by hand washing it every few days with regular dishwashing detergent. Avoid placing the case in the dishwasher as the high temperature may melt or warp the plastic. After washing, allow the case to dry as to prevent bacteria growth. Plastic guard cases do wear out over time, so we recommend replacing your case every 6-12 months or as needed.

Bring your Guard to your dental appointments.

It's always a good idea to bring your guard with you to your regular dental appointments. This allows your hygienist and dentist to inspect your guard for signs of wear and to help ensure that it is continuing to fit properly or to be professionally cleaned.

Replacement

Replace your mouth guard when the condition of your mouth changes, you have new fillings or crowns, or have had extractions. Mouth guards can also wear-out over time due to material deterioration, loss of resilience, tears, splits, cracking, or looseness.

Call the dental office if you have any questions or concerns about your mouth guard – (304) 723-7200