



AUSTRALIAN DENTAL  
ASSOCIATION

## Play it Safe

# Wear a mouthguard

Each year, thousands of adults and children are treated for dental injuries that could have been prevented or minimised by simply wearing a mouthguard. The Australian Dental Association strongly recommends the use of a mouthguard in any sport or activity where collision or contact is likely, and during both games and training. Often injuries in sports or activities that do occur are those we didn't even consider to be a danger. It's always best to 'play it safe' and wear a mouthguard to protect your teeth.

### Who Needs a Mouthguard?

Anyone who plays a sport or undertakes an activity where collision or contact to the face is a legitimate risk should wear a mouthguard. Sports such as rugby union and league, AFL, hockey and boxing are 'no brainers' because intentional collision and contact are a part of the game.

However, it is sports where accidental collision occurs that are often responsible for dental trauma, such as cricket, basketball, netball, touch football, and soccer. These sports are considered 'non-contact' and yet they also carry risk of accidental collision and contribute to the thousands of adults and children who are treated for dental trauma each year.

*You are at just as much risk during training as you are during the game!*

### The Damage

Dental trauma from sporting injury can include damage to the tooth nerve, fractured, cracked or knocked-out teeth, a broken jaw, damage to the tongue and cut lips. Unfortunately, a single case of dental trauma can lead to a lifetime of dental treatment in order to maintain the strength and health of the damaged tooth/teeth. Repair work does not last forever, so a damaged tooth will often become a lifelong problem. Prevention is always better than the cure, so play it safe and wear a mouthguard.

### Protecting your mouth

The Australian Dental Association recommends a custom-fitted mouthguard for all Australians who participate in contact sport or sports with high risk of dental injury.

A custom-fitted mouthguard that has been designed by your dentist makes breathing and speaking a lot easier when wearing your mouthguard, and overall are a lot more comfortable than their 'boil- and bite' counterparts. These are the mouthguards that you can purchase from a chemist or sports store that offer less protection as they are ill-fitted and loose in the mouth, which can be dangerous during impact.

### The Custom-Fitted Mouthguard – What to Expect

If you decide a custom-fitted mouthguard is the best option for you, your dentist will take an impression and create a plaster model of your teeth. This model will be used to accurately assess your mouth and design a uniquely fitted mouthguard. Once your mouthguard is fitted your dentist will advise you how to care for it properly.

A custom-fitted mouthguard may need to be replaced if it has been damaged, or if you have new teeth since your mouthguard was first fitted. Always make sure you have your mouthguard assessed by your dentist when you go for your regular check-ups.



For more information on oral health visit [ada.org.au](http://ada.org.au)

f [facebook.com/HealthyTeethAustralia](https://www.facebook.com/HealthyTeethAustralia)  
t [twitter.com/AUS\\_Dental](https://twitter.com/AUS_Dental)