How to Use and Clean Your Occlusal Splint

Commonly called a “bite splint,” an occlusal stabilization splint is a hard plastic overlay that you place on the biting surface of your upper or lower teeth. This kind of splint is used for people who clench and grind their teeth either moderately or severely. An occlusal splint is carefully designed to protect the teeth and the jaw joint. When used correctly, an occlusal splint may reduce the need for extensive treatment like multiple crowns, root canals, or jaw joint surgery.

Important instructions for your splint:

- The bite on your occlusal splint will need to be adjusted precisely. This will require at least 2 visits: the day you receive your splint, and after you’ve used your splint for several days.

- Wear your splint as often as you can, including when you sleep and whenever you tend to clench and grind.

- You may find that the splint initially causes an increase in saliva. This tends to diminish within a few days.

- Every day, clean your splint immediately after you remove it. Brush it both inside and out with a toothbrush using a small amount of water. Rinse and store the splint in its container. Once a week, you should soak it in an effervescent denture cleaner.

- DO NOT soak your splint in mouthwash. The acrylic is porous and will absorb the color of the mouthwash.

- **Bring your splint to each check-up and cleaning appointment.** It is important that we check the bite on your splint, which (to protect your teeth) is intentionally made of soft material that wears down over time. That means the bite will have to be periodically adjusted.

- The lifespan of an occlusal splint varies widely. For some, splints last a decade. For people with more severe grinding, splints may only last 3–5 years. Keep in mind that the expense of replacing a splint is a small fraction of the cost of fixing severely worn or broken teeth.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call our office at (816) 587-6444.