

Oral Health Fact Sheet

Oral Injury Prevention-Mouthguards

- ◆ A mouthguard is a horseshoe-shaped, soft plastic device used to protect the teeth, lips, gums and cheeks from injuries that occur when playing many different sports.
- ◆ The American Dental Association (ADA) reports that there are more than two million incidents of knocked-out teeth each year in the U.S. Many of these incidents are sports related.
- ◆ Mouthguards have been found to prevent more than 200,000 mouth injuries a year.
- ◆ Several studies suggest that mouthguards also reduce the number of concussions by decreasing the force of impact.
- ◆ There are three types of mouthguards:
 - Stock - ready to wear
 - Mouth formed - boil first and then bite to fit
 - Custom made - made by a dental professional from an impression of your teeth
- ◆ Mouthguards can range in price from \$1.00 to \$100.00. The money they can save you from repairing injuries to your mouth is well worth the investment.
- ◆ After using a mouthguard, it should be rinsed with water and stored in a rigid container with holes in it to allow the mouthguard to dry. Mouthguards can last for more than one season when cared for properly.
- ◆ The American Dental Association and other sports dentistry groups recommend the use of mouthguards in all organized team sports where a mouth injury can occur. This includes football, soccer, baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball, and wrestling.

