



PROTECTING YOUR ATHLETE'S SMILE

The mouth is a frequently injured area of the body during contact sports. Research has shown that most mouth injuries occur when athletes are not wearing a mouthguard. Wearing a mouthguard can help prevent broken teeth, cuts on the lips and tongue, and jaw injuries.

What Makes a Good Mouthguard?

- Mouthguards protect the teeth from trauma or loss and reduce the risk for jaw fractures.
- Mouthguards also minimize lacerated and bruised lips and cheeks by keeping these soft tissue areas away from the teeth, especially true for children with braces.
- Wearing a mouthguard is highly recommended for those participating in boxing, basketball, baseball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, martial arts, soccer, wrestling, water polo and rugby.

Which Mouthguard Is Right For Your Child?

- **Stock/Ready-made:** Available in various sizes and shapes, but cannot be adjusted to fit your mouth. Often, they are loose and bulky and may interfere with speaking or breathing.
- **Mouth-formed/Boil & Bite:** These plastic mouthguard shells are boiled in water for a few seconds, cooled under tap water and molded directly in the mouth.
- **Custom-made:** Dentists make these at the office or order them from a laboratory from a cast of your child's teeth. Young athletes are more likely to wear a mouthguard that fits comfortably, stays in place and allows for better breathing.

LifeSmile from Delta Dental can help you prevent disease and keep you and your child on the path toward a healthier, happier life. Healthy Smile, Happy Life: Take advantage of numerous free resources for improving your oral health at deltadentalmn.org/oral-health.

