

Mouth- guards The Ultimate Protection

By Kenneth J. Canzoneri, D.D.S.

Dental sports injuries affect all ages and skill levels. Teeth, lips, gums can be damaged during pee-wee football or a professional hockey game.

These injuries go beyond cut lips and fractured crowns to jaw fracture and displacement, and the biggest statistic of all - a tooth or teeth knocked out. This year five million teeth will be knocked out - mostly belonging to amateur athletes and school kids.

Most dental sports injuries can be prevented or minimized by wearing a mouthguard, an athlete is 60 times more likely to damage his or teeth.

A mouthguard is a plastic U-shaped device that works by covering the teeth protecting the lips, tongue, gums and cheeks creating a cushion between the upper and lower jaws. I am often asked in what sports should I wear a mouthguard? Anytime there is a strong chance for contact with other participants or hard surfaces, it is advisable to wear a mouthguard. Mouthguards should be worn when participating in football, basketball, baseball, wrestling, soccer, rugby, martial arts, skateboarding and bicycling.

There are three general types of mouthguards. Stock mouthguard; The lowest cost option, which offers the least protection because adjustment is limited. Mouth formed protectors: These are the boil and bite guards. Custom - made protectors: These are the best choice because it is custom made by your dentist to fit your teeth.

Enjoy sports and recreational activity just be sure to protect your smile.

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