



Home Care instructions for your Orthotic

TO REMOVE: With your fingertips, lift both sides of your orthotic at the same time. Lifting one side first could cause it to crack or break.

TO REPLACE: Center your teeth in the orthotic and push into place with your fingers. Be sure to push both sides down at the same time.

TO CLEAN: Remove the orthotic when you brush your teeth. Brush it with antibacterial soap and a soft bristled toothbrush. The orthotic or sleep appliance will change colors if you use a denture cleaner (Efferdent), if you use a toothpaste with whitening or any alcohol coated rinses, essential oils or fail to brush it leaving plaque or food on it.

NOTE: Putting your orthotic in very hot water will cause it to warp. However, as long as the orthotic is in position in your mouth, hot food and drinks will not damage it. Do not leave your appliance in a hot car or next to a heater.

SPECIAL NOTES:

1. You may initially experience an increase in symptoms immediately after being fitted with your orthotic. However, you should soon feel much better. If you have no improvement after 2-3 days, please call us. You may have had a dramatic change in your muscles and require an adjustment in your orthotic. Remember that it has taken years to get you to the current state of pathology and it will take some time for your body to heal. It won't happen overnight for most patients.
2. WEAR YOUR ORTHOTIC AT ALL TIMES AS INSTRUCTED. If instructed to wear while eating, it may take some time to get comfortable doing so. Start with well ground meats and soft vegetable (i.e. potatoes), pasta, yogurts and soups. Eliminate hard foods such as peanuts, raw vegetables, candy, gum and ice cubes. This will be an adjustment but can be accomplished with patient and commitment.
3. You will find you may have either increased saliva or a dry mouth until you become accustomed to wearing your orthotic. Relax and be patient!
4. The best way to learn to speak with your orthotic is to do so. It may take several days to become accustomed to speaking with it and it may be helpful for you to stand in front of the mirror to practice enunciating your words slowly. Don't be afraid to slowly exaggerate the enunciation of your words. But remember, you will think you notice the orthotic feel or sounding different much more than other people will.
5. At all time, try to keep your mouth in the rest position, lips together and teeth slightly apart with your tongue on the roof of your mouth. Your teeth should only touch the orthotic when you eat or swallow. The rest position helps reduce the workload on the temporomandibular joints, relax the muscles, and teach you not to clench or grind your teeth.
6. Whenever orthotic is not in your mouth, DO NOT PLACE IN NAPKIN OR PAPER TOWEL, as it will most likely get thrown away. To replace will be the patients' responsibility.

7. If your orthotic becomes damaged or breaks call our office immediately.
8. If sore spots or canker sores develop inside your mouth, call us so we may eliminate the source of the sores. Warm salt water rinses or Periosciences rinse can be used until you get to the office. If you develop an ulcer, use Zilactin to make an "oral bandage". This can be purchased over-the-counter at most pharmacies.
9. If dental treatment still needs to be performed be sure to take some breaks during the procedure. Refrain from opening as wide as you can to avoid stretching or straining your muscles or ligaments. Continue your routine dental appointment and cleanings. PLEASE CONSULT WITH US IF DENTAL WORK IS REQUIRED. EXTENSIVE DENTAL WORK, EXCEPT EMERGENCIES, IS DISCOURAGED BECAUSE IT MAY CHANGE THE FIT OF YOUR ORTHOTIC AND REQUIRE A REPLACEMENT (YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT FEE). TELL YOUR DENTIST YOU ARE BEING TREATED FOR TMJ DYSFUNCTION. We also recommend moist heat on the sides of your face before and after visits. This will help discomfort in the muscle and joints that might occur because of the work.
10. If general anesthesia is scheduled make sure you advise the anesthesiologist that you currently are (or have in the past) undergoing TMJ treatment and take extreme precautions to limit the opening of the mouth pre- and post-operatively during the procedure.
11. Keep your orthotic away from pets (dogs, cats and etc) because they love to chew on them!

IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL OUR OFFICE. WE WANT TO HELP YOU ADJUST TO ALL PHASES OF YOUR TREATMENT.

** REMEMBER YOU HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT TREATING TMD IS A WORK IN PROGRESS. MUSCLES, LIGAMENTS AND JOINT POSITIONS CAN CONTINUE TO CHANGE WITH HEALING. TMJ POSITION MAY DECOMPRESS AGAIN IN THUS REQUIRING FURTHER ADJUSTMENTS, RESURFACING YOUR ORTHODIC AND/OR FURTHER BITE EVALUATION.

If you are undergoing therapy from a chiropractor or a physical therapist you may have changes in muscles, ligaments, spine and posture that can affect your TMJ position. This will be a separate treatment from your original treatment plan as the muscle and ligaments and TMD are exposed to many contributing factors even with change in posture, health, and stressors on the sympathetic nervous system.

Patient Signature: _____ Date: _____

Patient Print: _____