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Instructions for Patients with TMJ Splints

Today you received an acrylic orthotic appliance or Temporal-Mandibular-Joint (TMJ) splint. It will help your face and jaw muscles to work in better harmony with your teeth and jaw joints. The appliance will feel awkward and bulky until you adapt to it. Following are instructions that will help you adapt.

1. You must wear the splint at night while sleeping, in order for it to be effective. Your teeth may be sore for a day or two until the splint “settles in”. Your cheeks and tongue may feel sore for a few days also. Your teeth and bite will feel a little different for 20-30 minutes after the splint is removed.
2. Your speech will be altered initially, after several adjustment appointments some of the excess splint material will be trimmed and speech should improve.
3. The splint will collect plaque and must be cleaned daily to avoid odors and stains. Commercial denture cleansers may be used to clean the splint, follow the instructions that accompany the product. Brushing it with a mild hand soap and old tooth brush works well.
4. Do not allow the splint near excessive heat. Heat will cause distortion of the plastic and it will not fit. Keep the appliance away from pets; they are attracted to the acrylic and will use it to correct their own TMJ dysfunction (or they will chew and destroy it).
5. The appointments scheduled for adjustments are just as important as the splint itself. Please make all efforts to keep these appointments. Adjustments of the splint are necessary for the improvement of your TMJ problem.
6. It usually takes a week or two before you notice an improvement of your symptoms, from then on, improvement will be slow and gradual. So do not be disturbed if you do not notice immediate improvement of your symptoms.
7. As adjustments are made to the splint, holes may appear in areas where adjusting was done. If the strength of the splint is significantly compromised, we will redesign a new one.
8. The splint is only made of acrylic. Be especially careful with where you store it when you remove it to eat. Always store it in the case provided.

If you should encounter any problems, please call the office.