

Play Ball.....With a Mouthguard!

By Dr. Allan J. Milewski, D.D.S.

Spring is in the air, with sweet sounds of robins chirping, bees buzzing and parents zooming around trying to get their children to their endless sporting events. Baseball, Softball, Soccer, Basketball, Lacrosse, Biking...our kids do love their sports. We wouldn't dream of sending them out to play without the necessary equipment ...shin guards, proper shoes, gloves, hats...but what about mouthguards?

Mouthguards are a flexible appliance made out of plastic that protect your teeth from injury during contact sports. According to the Academy of General Dentistry, over 200,000 sports related injuries to the mouth and jaw occur each year. Mouthguards help reduce the risk of injury by cushioning the impact of a blow to the face, protecting both teeth and soft tissues in your mouth.

When choosing a mouthguard for you or your child, remember the best type is one that will be worn! If the mouthguard does not fit well, your child will probably balk at wearing it. The lowest cost option is a stock mouthguard which requires the mouth to be closed to hold it in place. These frequently can be uncomfortable, bulky and can impair speech and breathing. Boil and Bite mouthguards are usually purchased in sporting goods stores and offer a better fit than stock mouth protectors. These guards are softened in water, then inserted into your mouth and molded to your teeth. Although better fitting than stock mouthguards, these too can be bulky and ill fitting.

The best fitting type of mouthguard is custom made by your dentist. A cast is made of your teeth, and the guard is fabricated to fit exactly to your teeth. These custom mouthguards are comfortable and offer the highest level of protection.

A well fitting mouthguard can protect against serious injuries to your mouth. Be a well equipped athlete...wear a mouthguard!

For more information on mouthguards, contact Dr. Milewski at (330) 725-2242 or visit us on the web at www.MedinaFamilyDentistry.com. Dr. Milewski is a General Dentist practicing in Medina.