

TEETH GRINDING

BRUXISM

Grinding your teeth or clenching your jaw, besides being painful, can cause lasting damage to your oral health. Teeth grinding often occurs during sleep, and may be caused by stress and anxiety, sleep disorders, or an abnormal bite.

Symptoms include a dull headache or sore jaw, especially when you wake up. You may also experience pain in your face, head or neck.

Severe grinding leads to painful, loose, or fractured teeth. You could grind part of your teeth away and destroy your bone and gum tissues. If you suspect you are grinding your teeth at night, your dentist will exam you for signs such as worn teeth or fractured tooth enamel.

Possible treatments include:

- Wearing a mouth guard while you sleep. This is a fitted device that slips over your upper teeth to prevent them from grinding against your lower teeth.

- Reducing stress.
- Repairing an abnormal bite.
- Avoiding caffeine and alcohol, especially before bed.
- Avoiding chewing gum.

- Relaxing your jaw muscles at night (for example, placing a warm, moist cloth against your cheek)
- Being aware of jaw clenching during the day and training yourself to stop it.

