



# Tooth Talk

## ***“Hey Doc, my teeth are getting short and my face is sore in the morning. Am I grinding my teeth away?”***

Teeth grinding, known as Bruxism, can be due to a variety of reasons. The reason behind a patient's Bruxism can be very difficult to diagnose. However, some of the causes can be due to:

- Occlusion-the position of the teeth when the jaws are closed.
- Malocclusion- the incorrect position of the teeth when the jaws are closed.
- Stress
- Genetic predisposition.

What can happen with Bruxism?

- Headaches - Bruxer can suffer headaches, similar to migraines. As Bruxism can be most severe when the person is asleep, headaches upon waking are not uncommon.
- Sore face & jaw muscles - Muscles in particular can become sore. These are the muscles which are located in the temple area and in the lower jaw just in front of and below the jaw joint -
- TMJ dysfunction - The Temporal Mandibular Joint (ie. the jaw hinge) can be affected by Bruxism, and the muscles surrounding this area can go into spasm, or muscle 'shock'. In severe cases, a patient may not be able to open his/her mouth.
- Wearing of teeth - Teeth are not designed to be ground away all night long, every night. Therefore, they start to wear away. As you only get one set of adult teeth, it's best not to wear them out prematurely.
- Fracture of teeth - Following excess wear, the teeth may develop signs of micro-fractures. This may lead to parts of the teeth fracturing. These fractures could eventually spread down to the nerve which would require root canal treatment.

To help eliminate the symptoms above, the patient can wear a teeth grinding/Bruxism guard. The guard is made from a similar material to a sports mouthguard. Some people call it a night guard but it can be worn during the day as Bruxism can occur at any time during the day.

The Bruxism guard won't necessarily stop the grinding but it helps to eliminate the symptoms. Think of wearing a shoe with a nail in the sole. This is uncomfortable and can be painful. However, if you put an insole into the shoe, the nail is still there but the symptoms have gone.



**4 Russell St. E., Lindsay**

**[www.drVictorsun.com](http://www.drVictorsun.com)**

**705 324-0050**

