

## **OCCLUSAL GUARD CARE AND WEAR INSTRUCTIONS**



Congratulations on your decision to wear a protective occlusal guard! An occlusal guard will protect your teeth from premature wear, and your jaw joints from damage as well. In some cases, it will even help prevent premature tooth loss.

### ***Wear It Nightly:***

Wear your guard at night only, while you sleep. Plan on wearing your guard nightly for the next few years. Please remember that your guard is also a retainer, and prevents tooth movement (teeth will usually shift and move slightly throughout your life). Therefore, if you do not wear your guard for a few weeks or months, it may not fit!

### ***Muscle Soreness:***

If you begin to awaken with muscle soreness, or if the guard appears to be wearing thin, you may wish to wear it every other or every third night. Some people get used to the guard after a few months, and begin to grind on it. This is what caused the muscle soreness to occur (or reoccur), and the guard may wear out sooner than normal.

### ***Cleaning and Storage:***

Store your guard in its container when it is not in your mouth. Many guards have been thrown away after being wrapped in tissue, or have been eaten by dogs (no joking!). Your guard will accumulate plaque and tartar on it, just as your teeth do. Depending on how fast you see this build up on your guard will determine how often you need to clean it. I suggest just rinsing your guard with water most days before storing it in its container. Use toothpaste to brush it every few days. Additionally, you may soak it in mild dish soap occasionally. Avoid denture cleaners, such as Efferdent as these are too harsh for your guard. At your hygiene visits, ask the hygienist to clean it professionally for you. We are happy to do this at no charge.

As always, please call if you have any questions or concerns!