

Bruxism

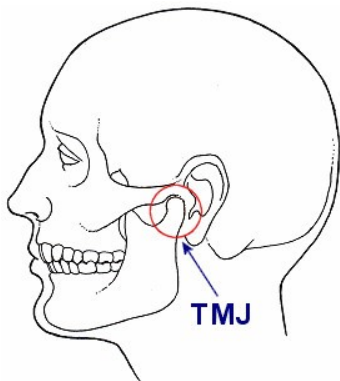
Bruxism may be defined as the excessive clenching and grinding of the teeth which is not part of normal function (parafunction).

Clenching and grinding may occur in adults and children during the day, and commonly at night when they have no control over the parafunction.

Signs and symptoms

- 1 Flattened worn tooth surfaces with microfractures of tooth enamel.
- 2 Chipped or broken teeth, due to the surface wear and also around the neck of the tooth caused by excessive flexion.
- 3 Pain in teeth or temperature sensitivity due to exposure of the underlying exposed dentine.
- 4 Facial pain in particular tension headache caused by muscle contraction.
- 5 Loose teeth and possible bone loss
- 6 Stiffness, pain, tenderness or clicking in the jaw joint often causing restricted opening.

There may be variation in the symptoms according to the nature and strength of the clenching and grinding.



www.teethhealthlife.com.au
info@teethhealthlife.com.au
Ph: 03 9650 5143

Causes

A combination of factors are believed to contribute to bruxism.

- 1 Physical stress including illness and nutritional deficiencies.
- 2 Psychological stress, anxiety and tension.
- 3 Abnormal anatomy of the teeth and or jaws, causing unbalanced occlusion (bite).

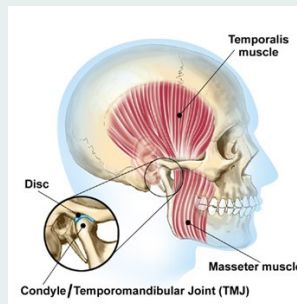
Muscle Groups

The muscles involved in bruxism are:

Temporalis

Masseter- deep and superficial

Lateral Pterygoid



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DISCUSS YOUR TREATMENT WITH YOUR DENTIST

This information leaflet is intended to provide general information about the treatment. It is important for you to always discuss your treatment with your dentist, which will depend on many factors including age, condition and position of your teeth, as well as pre-existing conditions and the degree of the problem.

Your dentist cannot guarantee treatment will be successful and it is important that you fully discuss treatment, all costs and the likely expected outcome.

We encourage you to discuss in detail anything you are unsure of or are unhappy with about your teeth.

*Dr Susan J Poulson
Dr Carolina Perez
Dr Anthony Lio*

Diagnosis

Your dentist may be able to diagnose bruxism based on a clinical examination and your medical and dental history. Moulds of your teeth and x rays may be required. You will be examined to

- 1 Locate the pain and stiffness
- 2 Detect noises in the jaw joint
- 3 Assess your range of of jaw movement
- 4 Assess your bite, tooth movement and tooth wear

Bruxism may also occur in combination with acid erosion from dietary or physiological causes. The excessive acid weakens the tooth enamel and can result in more rapid and severe tooth wear than bruxism alone.

COST

You should be provided with an estimate of cost before you commence treatment. Should any additional work become necessary due to unforeseen circumstances your dentist will advise you of this and any additional costs at the time.

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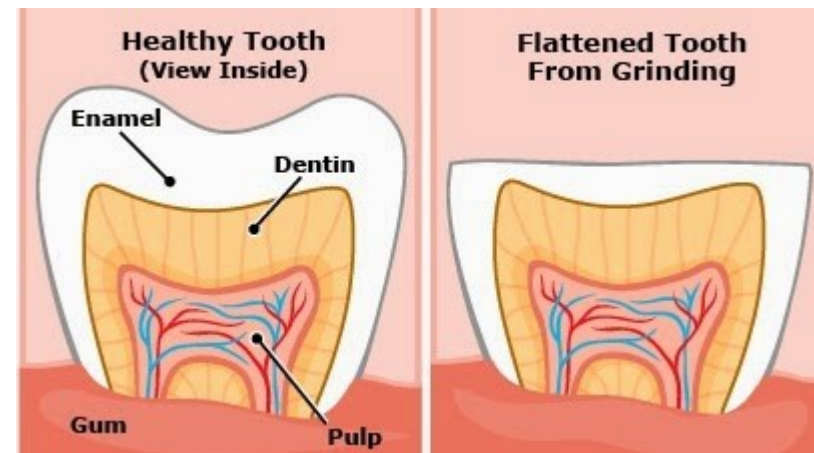
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Treatment

The aim of treatment is to remove the causes of and change the behaviour which causes bruxism. Damage caused by bruxism may be repaired using bonding, fillings, inlays or onlays, or crowns. You may be prescribed painkillers or muscle relaxant medication to relax the jaw joint

An occlusal splint is commonly prescribed. It is moulded from hard plastic and are worn over either the upper or lower teeth at night time to prevent further damage and may act as a habit breaker for the parafunctional activity to allow the muscles to relax.

Biofeedback may be useful for those who mainly clench during the day, and involves the use of an electronic monitor to measure muscle tension. This may allow the person to learn to relax the muscles.



Dr Susan J Poulson
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