

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Before your treatment can begin we will need to know your medical history. You should advise us of any health problems you may have had. In particular please advise us if you have any jaw injuries, previous treatment related to bruxism or jaw surgery. In addition to this you should list the medications you are taking or have recently taken.

After trying to address the causes of the bruxism, our treatment is aimed at preventing further damage to the teeth and joints, and repair of any damage which has occurred.

We will look for problems likely to lead to abnormal contact among upper and lower teeth. Your bite may need to be improved or adjusted. If pain is a symptom we will look for related causes such as an ear infection or a temporomandibular disorder.

Treatment may include:

- Painkillers for muscular facial pain, headaches and jaw joint pain
- Muscle relaxant medication to help relax the jaw muscles
- A specialised nightguard/bitesplint to relieve symptoms and prevent further damage
- Adjusting the teeth so they fit together better
- Rebuilding the bite to replace lost tooth height and to prevent further damage



If you would like to know more about bruxism and what we can do to help you, please contact us for further information.



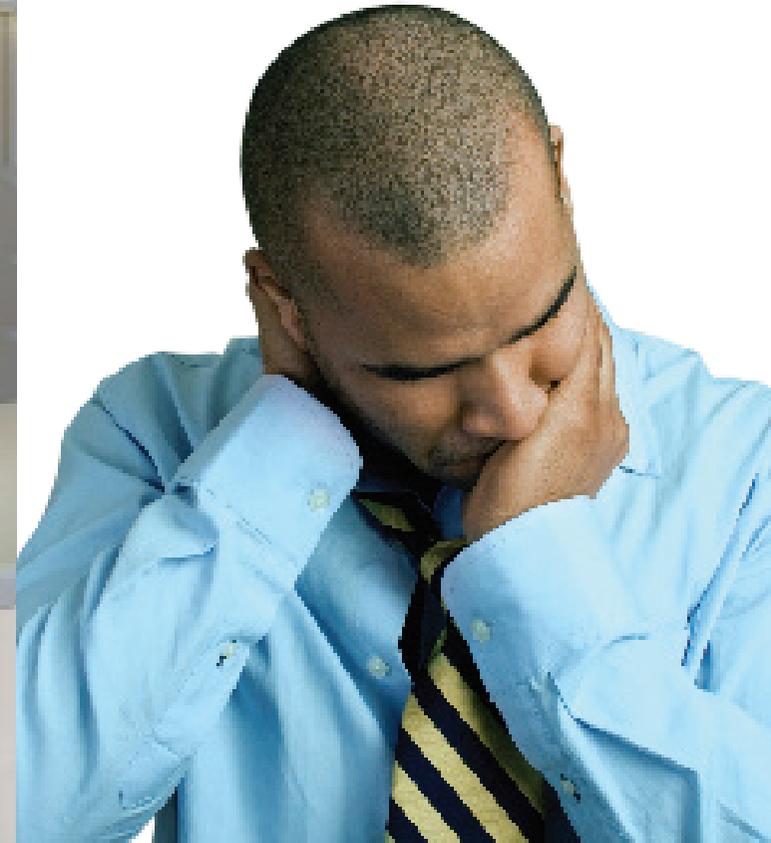
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Bruxism

- Do you clench or grind your teeth?
- Do you suffer from headaches?
- Is your jaw painful?



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ABOUT BRUXISM

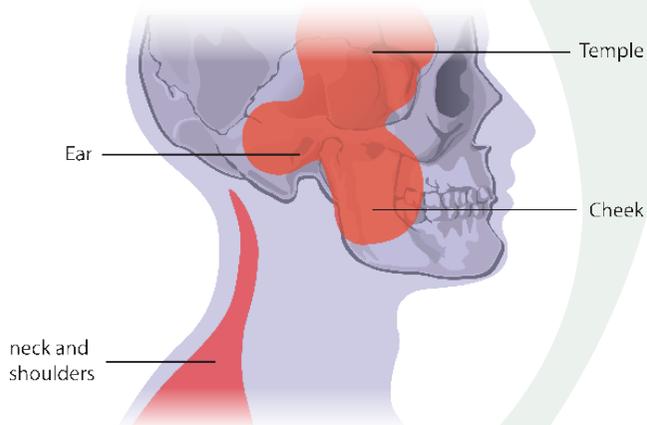
Bruxism (pronounced BRUK-sizm) is the term used to describe the clenching or grinding of the teeth that is not a part of your normal chewing movement. Bruxism can cause excessive wear on the teeth and is the most common cause of damage to the teeth and the jaw joints.

Grinding most commonly occurs at night, while you are asleep, but some people may also grind their teeth during the day. Bruxism sufferers may also bite their fingernails or chew the insides of their cheeks.

WHAT CAUSES BRUXISM?

The causes of bruxism are still being researched but this action has strong links to factors such as:

- Psychological stress, anxiety and tension in adults and children
- Problems with size, shape and alignment of teeth
- Jaw joint (temporomandibular joint or 'TMJ') abnormalities
- Alcohol consumption and some medications



WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BRUXISM?

The signs and symptoms of bruxism may vary according to the frequency, duration and strength of the clenching and grinding.

They may include:

- Pain and sensitivity to hot and cold
- Noise that occurs as the teeth are ground together
- Ongoing facial pain and tension headaches
- Worn tooth surfaces leading to exposure of the centre of the tooth (dentine) and some times wearing down to the gumline
- Abnormal alignment of the teeth, caused by uneven tooth wear
- Receding gumlines and lost enamel on the sides of teeth caused by the tooth flexing under pressure
- Fractures of the tooth enamel leading to an increased likelihood of tooth decay, fractured sections of teeth and splintering of tooth roots
- Stiffness and pain in the jaw joint that causes limited opening and makes chewing difficult.
- Earache - commonly misdiagnosed as an ear infection

There are various symptoms associated with this condition. Usually this reflects the nature of the clenching and grinding involved. When teeth are clenched tightly the result is often tension-related headaches but may have little or no damage to the teeth or jaw joint. Tight clenching alone puts minimal pressure on the jaw joint, however grinding aggressively may damage teeth and jaw joint problems.

In some situations, you may not even realise that you suffer from bruxism as mild tooth grinding will often display worn teeth surfaces, but no jaw joint pain or teeth sensitivity.

