

Mouthguard Awareness Campaign 'Sport Hurts – Wear a Mouthguard'

As part of its commitment to promote and encourage good oral health to the public the Australian Dental Association (ADA) is once again holding its annual campaign to raise Mouthguard Awareness across the country.

Accidents happen when least expected. Every year thousands of children are treated for dental injuries which could have been avoided or minimized by wearing a protective custom-fitted mouthguard. Sporting accidents are one of the most common causes of dental injury.

Federal President of the ADA, Dr Neil Hewson said, "Injuries to the orofacial region may have catastrophic functional and psychological consequences for individuals. Mouthguards are widely recognized as reducing the severity of an injury to the orofacial region. A mouthguard helps absorb and spread the impact of a blow to the face that could result in an injury to the mouth or jaw. Damaged or dislodged teeth, broken jaws and cut lips are just some of the injuries that can occur if the mouth is not protected.

"Dental injuries may result in time off school or work to recover, can be painful and disfiguring, and may involve lengthy and costly dental treatment. The cost of repairing even minor injuries to the teeth or jaw far exceeds the cost of a custom-fitted mouthguard. A mouthguard at play keeps dental injury away."

Mouthguards should be worn whilst playing and training for any sport that could involve contact to the face. It is essential to wear a mouthguard while playing contact sports such as rugby or football, and also while playing sports where there is a chance of being hit in the jaw or head. These include hockey, netball, baseball, basketball and even skateboarding and skiing. Mouthguards should be included as part of one's protective equipment.

Other mouthguard tips:

- The Australian Dental Association and Standards Australia strongly recommend investing in a custom-fitted mouthguard from your dentist. A custom-fitted mouthguard allows for greatest ease of speech and breathing, best retention and highest comfort and so offers the best protection.
- Have your mouthguard checked by your dentist every 12 months for proper fit and protection.
- Keep your mouthguard clean and store it in a rigid container away from heat to ensure it maintains its shape.
- Always clean your mouthguard in cold water after each use.

For more information on mouthguards and protecting teeth visit: www.mouthguardawareness.info

