

## Mouthguards Gum shields Sports guards



Laura Keates plays for England Rugby Union and Worcester RFC. She never plays without her mouthguard.

For more info visit [www.dentaltrauma.co.uk](http://www.dentaltrauma.co.uk)

or tweet your experience @dentaltraumauk

## Taking care of my mouthguard

- Rinse the mouthguard before and after use with cold water
- Brush the mouthguard with your tooth brush and soapy water at least once a week
- When you are not wearing it, keep it safe in a hard plastic box
- Avoid contact with hot water or sunlight
- Get your dentist to check the mouthguard for signs of wear and tear of the biting surfaces when you go for a check up

## When should I wear my gum shield?

You should wear it for all of your practice sessions, as well as matches/games.

**No mouthguard?**

**No play!**

## What if I wear Orthodontic braces?

**Removable braces** These should not be worn during sports so the mouthguard should fit over the teeth only.

**Fixed braces** You will need a specially made mouthguard to fit over your fixed braces. Your dentist will be able to advise you about this.

If there is anything you are unsure about or if you have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to ask a member of our team.

## What to do if I have any queries?

If you are worried about your teeth and cannot wait until your next appointment, please call

Telephone no.

Otherwise, ask us at your next appointment.

Practice stamp/address

## What is a mouthguard?

A mouthguard, also known as a sports guard or a gum shield, is made from a soft rubber which fits over all of your teeth to protect them from damage when playing sports.



## Who needs a mouthguard?

Anyone who wants to protect their teeth, save their smile and play sports should wear a mouthguard.

Any contact sports can result in trauma to your teeth e.g. football, boxing, hockey, cricket, rugby, American football, martial arts, wrestling, basketball, netball, cycling, gymnastics, skating, skateboarding, skiing and more.

Wearing a professional mouthguard whilst playing these sports protects your teeth by absorbing the forces of a traumatic impact. There is growing evidence that they reduce the risk of concussion too (mild brain injuries).

## Where can I get a mouthguard?

Your dentist can make you a well-fitting mouthguard.

Moulds of your teeth will be taken by the dentist. These are sent to a laboratory where the mouthguard is made to fit your teeth.

A well fitting mouthguard is comfortable. It also:

- Provides the best protection for your teeth
- Protects them from being knocked out, broken or displaced
- Prevents injuries to your jaw bone
- Is comfortable and lets you breath and talk normally
- Can save you a lot of financial, emotional and psychological expense in the long term.

## How long does a mouthguard last?

Your mouthguard will need replacing at yearly intervals if you are young and still growing. In adults they can last for many years particularly if you look after it well.

All mouthguards will have wear and tear. It should be checked annually by your dentist to make sure it is still functioning.

If you are concerned the mouthguard no longer fits for any reason, it should be checked by your dentist.

## What is involved in making a mouthguard?

Your dentist will take moulds of your top and bottom teeth (seen below) and record your bite.



The moulds are sent to the laboratory who make the mouthguard using a special machine.

There are some kits that you can buy which involve taking the impression yourself. This is not recommended as they often result in mouthguards that do not adapt to your teeth very well and provide little protection.