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Leading health charity declares: 'Don't put your oral health at risk, wear a mouthguard'

09 October 2018

The Oral Health Foundation is encouraging regular use of mouthguards in contact sports, following a widescale review into the health of athletes.

A systematic review of more than 256 studies showed the number of dental injuries while participating in sport is significantly higher in those who do not use [mouthguards](#).

Common injuries were found to include broken, chipped or knocked out teeth, bitten tongues and dislocated jaws.

The Oral Health Foundation believe wearing mouthguards would prevent such injuries and should be made a requirement across sports such as cricket, football, rugby, hockey and martial arts.

Dr Nigel Carter OBE, Chief Executive of the Oral Health Foundation, is keen to highlight the importance of wearing a mouthguard for sports with either physical contact or fast-moving objects.

Dr Carter says: "In many cases, knocked out teeth, or teeth that have been chipped or damaged through trauma can, be avoided by wearing a mouthguard.

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"Mouthguards should not be optional but absolutely essential when it comes to adults and children participating in activities and sports that involves physical contact or fast-moving objects."

A mouthguard is a specially made, rubber-like cover which fits exactly over your teeth and gums, cushioning them and protecting them from damage.

Custom-made mouthguards, which fit your mouth exactly, can be made by a dentist.

These mouthguards can also prevent damage to the jaw, neck and even the brain – helping to prevent against concussion and damage caused by a heavy blow.

"We all take our teeth for granted. Often, it is only when we are faced with the reality of losing one, or several, that we realise just how important they are," Dr Carter adds.

"It costs around £40 - £50 to get your own mouthguard made, which will be more comfortable and provide better protection than ones you can get off the shelf.

"It may sound like a lot of money, but when you consider how much it will cost to have dental work done to repair broken teeth or the impact of early tooth loss, this is a small price to pay for peace of mind.

"Getting enough exercise each week is essential for both your physical and mental well-being, but it doesn't have to come with a risk to your oral health."



For more information and advice on [mouthguards](#), contact the Oral Health Foundation's free and confidential Dental Helpline on 01788 539 780.

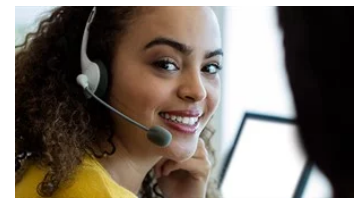
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I. Fernandes, L., Neto, J. and Lima, I. (2018). The use of mouthguards and prevalence of dento-alveolar trauma among athletes. A systematic review and meta-analysis. Dental Traumatology.

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