What is a Mouthguard?
A mouthguard is a cushioning appliance made of flexible material that fits snugly over the teeth to help prevent injuries to the teeth and mouth. An effective mouthguard is like a 'crash helmet' for teeth and jaws.

Who should wear a mouthguard?
Anyone who plays a sport that carries a major risk of a knock to the face should wear a mouthguard. This includes sports like:

- football
- hockey
- rugby
- soccer
- basketball
- netball
- water polo
- volleyball

Wear a mouthguard while playing and training. Also wear it when doing fun activities like rollerblading, skateboarding, mountain bike riding, trampolining and horse riding to protect your smile.

What are the advantages of using a mouthguard?
A mouthguard can help cushion a strong blow to the face that otherwise might result in an injury to the mouth. It acts as a shock absorber protecting the teeth and lower jaw from breaking and prevents you from accidentally biting your lips, tongue or cheeks. A misdirected elbow in a one-on-one basketball game or a fall off a skateboard can leave you with chipped or broken teeth, nerve damage to a tooth or even tooth loss.

Which type is best?
The best mouthguard is one fitted to your mouth that doesn’t restrict breathing. It should be stable, comfortable, allow talk between mates and not cause choking.

Off-the-shelf mouthguards available at sport stores and chemists are cheap but often cannot be made to fit the mouth properly. A custom made mouthguard obtained from a dental professional provides the best comfort and fit. Remember though, as the mouth grows, a new guard is needed.

What about braces?
A mouthguard is recommended for people who wear braces as it can help prevent damage to the brackets from a blow to the face and provides a barrier between the braces and cheek or lips. Talk to your dentist or orthodontist about selecting a mouthguard that is best for you. If you have a retainer or other removable appliance, do not wear it during any contact sports.

How do you care for a mouthguard?
- Rinse the mouthguard in mouthwash or mild antiseptic just before use.
- Rinse the mouthguard with water before putting into mouth.
- Clean mouthguard after use by washing with mild soap and cold water.
- Store dry mouthguard in a rigid box and away from heat.

Call your dental professional if there are any problems.

Accidents happen and dental injuries can be disfiguring and costly to repair!

Prevention makes good sense, so play safe with a mouthguard!
TOOTH KNOCKED OUT!!

DON’T DELAY ... TIME IS CRITICAL!

Keep calm and find the tooth

Pick it up by the crown (whiter part). AVOID touching the root

If the **TOOTH IS DIRTY**, rinse it in milk. If not available, rinse briefly (a few seconds) under running water, **NOT** in antiseptic. Then...

1. Put it back into the socket. Use the other teeth as a guide
2. To keep the tooth in place either bite on a cloth or use finger pressure. Aluminium foil can also be used to help stabilise the tooth

**If UNABLE TO REPLANT the tooth, keep moist by following one of these alternatives...**

- Place tooth in person’s mouth between the cheek and gums
- **OR**
- Put tooth in a glass of milk fully covered
- **OR**
- Cover the tooth with the person’s saliva and put in plastic wrap
- **DO NOT STORE IN WATER**

*HINT - Keep long-life milk in a First Aid kit*

**DO NOT** hold or rub the root surface or let the tooth dry, as the living cells lining the root of the tooth could become damaged and die. Also do not put the tooth on ice.

**DO NOT** remove any tissue or gum fragments from tooth

**DO NOT** delay seeking dental care. Teeth replanted within 30 minutes have the best chance of surviving. If possible have someone telephone ahead to alert the dentist.

**DO NOT** replant a baby tooth due to risk of injury to the underlying adult tooth. If in doubt place the tooth in milk and seek dental advice.

Get dental help ***IMMEDIATELY***

For more information contact your dental clinic or Dental Health Services on 9313 0555. Alternatively visit www.dental.wa.gov.au