



### How do I know if I grind my teeth at night?

A lot of people don't know until a loved one tells them, but there are many symptoms of tooth-grinding, such as jaw pain and headaches. If left untreated, grinding your teeth or even tightly clenching your teeth together can lead to bite changes and jaw disorders as well as teeth wearing down and breaking. Sometimes, some teeth may even be lost.

### What causes tooth-grinding?

Also called "bruxism", tooth-grinding is commonly caused by stress, anger, a malformed bite, or missing or crooked teeth. Medical problems can sometimes result in tooth-grinding. Examples are parasites such as pinworms or having a calcium or magnesium deficiency.

### What are the symptoms?

If you are experiencing jaw pain, headaches or earaches in the morning, increased tooth sensitivity or your teeth appear flattened, you may be grinding your teeth at night. A discussion with your dentist will help to determine the best treatment.

### How is it treated?

Treatment depends on the cause. To treat bruxism, your dentist may create a custom-fitted mouthguard to protect your teeth while you sleep. Your dentist may also encourage you to find ways to relieve stress throughout the day and to try relaxing your jaw muscles before bed. If medical problems exist, they also need to be treated. Sometimes, a combination of treatments is best. Your dentist is the best person to guide you.

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