

---

## SPLINT THERAPY

Because we have noticed that you have signs of **OCCLUSAL DISEASE** or you have reported symptoms associated with **T.M.D.**, we are recommending that we enter a diagnostic phase of treatment to determine the reason(s) for these signs and symptoms. It is important for you to understand that if you are interested in treating this condition, Splint Therapy is the beginning process for us to determine your specific needs.

An **OCCLUSAL SPLINT** is **not** a simple “night-guard”. You may be familiar with or have heard of friends who use a night-guard to protect their teeth from the forces of clenching/grinding during their sleep. While such an appliance can be beneficial, current research and our own experiences have proven that it is often not wise to simply treat the symptoms, and not the cause, of these destructive habits. Our goal is to provide you with a healthy, stable mouth and not to simply manage the habit while conditions continue to worsen. Our philosophy is to help our patients need us less as they get older, not to become more dependent and require more extensive dentistry in the future.

The Occlusal Splint appears very similar to a typical night-guard (an orthodontic retainer) yet its purpose is much different. Not only does it function to protect your teeth from the damaging forces of clenching and grinding, it also allows us to better analyze your bite relationship and determine its contribution to your signs and symptoms. This diagnostic phase of treatment allows us to offer treatment alternatives that are customized to your specific needs and thus provides you an opportunity to understand the reasons for your condition. It is also a discovery process for us; we can not know what the factors are that contribute to your situation until we complete Splint Therapy. We want our patients to play an integral part in the treatment decisions that will impact the future of their oral health.

Following Splint Therapy, a treatment that typically takes 1 to 3 months to accomplish, we will offer you the results of our analysis and provide you the best treatment recommendations should any exist. Our experience has shown that it is often best to first complete this phase of treatment, prior to any other needed dental restorations (urgencies excluded), so that future fillings and/or crowns will not contribute to or worsen the situation.

***Splint Therapy is rarely covered by any Dental Insurance.*** Their role is to assist you with only immediate problems, utilizing the least expensive alternatives (not necessarily the best), without consideration for continued deterioration of your oral health. Our mission is to ***prevent*** future dental needs, provide predictable quality dentistry and allow you to make decisions that impact your future dental needs. We have found this to be the most cost effective approach for all of our patients regardless of Dental Insurance restrictions.