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Occlusal Splint for TMJ & Bite Issues

Are you experiencing [jaw popping](#) or [locking](#), [chronic headaches](#), persistent [jaw pain](#), or [worn-down teeth](#)? These uncomfortable symptoms often stem from an [imbalanced bite](#) or stress on your jaw joints, collectively known as [Temporomandibular Disorders](#) (TMD) or [bite misalignments](#). At Aesthetic Smile Designs, we understand how these issues can impact your daily life.

We offer a non-invasive, highly effective solution: a custom-fitted occlusal splint (also known as an [orthotic splint](#)). This comfortable appliance is designed to stabilize your bite, relieve strain on your jaw and muscles, and promote deep relaxation, helping you find lasting relief from pain and discomfort.

Could an Occlusal Splint Help You?

Many adults experience symptoms that point to an imbalanced bite or issues with their jaw joints (TMJ). If you recognize any of these, an occlusal splint could be the solution you've been looking for:

- Chronic headaches or migraines: Especially in the temples or around the ears.
- Jaw pain or tenderness: When chewing, speaking, or even at rest.
- Clicking, popping, or grating sounds in your jaw.
- Difficulty opening your mouth wide or your jaw locking.
- Unexplained [tooth sensitivity](#) or loose teeth.
- [Worn teeth](#), [chipped](#), or fractured teeth: Often a tell-tale sign of nighttime grinding or clenching.
- Neck or shoulder pain: This can be referred to as pain from jaw tension.
- Disrupted sleep due to [clenching or grinding](#).

Occlusal Splint vs Night Guard

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While both are worn in the mouth, it's important to understand that a custom occlusal splint is far more precise and sophisticated than a generic "night guard" your dentist might give you because you grind your teeth.

- **Night Guards (Generic):** These are typically soft, bulky, and designed primarily to create a physical barrier between your upper and lower teeth. While they might prevent some tooth wear from grinding, they often do little to address the underlying bite issues or jaw joint problems. In some cases, a poorly fitted generic night guard can even worsen symptoms or shift your bite over time.
- **Occlusal Splint (Custom):** At Aesthetic Smile Designs, our occlusal splint is custom-made based on precise measurements of your unique bite and jaw position. It is strategically designed to:
 - Guide your jaw into a stable, comfortable, and healthy position.
 - Redistribute biting forces evenly, relieving stress on specific teeth and your jaw joints.
 - Allow your jaw muscles to fully relax, which is key to relieving pain and tension.
 - Promote healing within the temporomandibular joint by reducing irritation.

In essence, a generic night guard is a shield, while a custom occlusal splint is a therapeutic device designed to actively correct and stabilize your bite for long-term relief and improved oral health.

How Does an Occlusal Splint Work?

Your custom occlusal splint is designed to create a harmonious environment for your jaw and teeth, guiding your bite into a more comfortable and functional position. Here's how it helps:

- **Protect Your Teeth:** It acts as a protective barrier, especially if you grind or clench your teeth, preventing further wear, chips, or fractures.
- **Balance Your Bite:** The splint creates an ideal, even biting surface, which redistributes pressure and reduces excessive force on individual teeth or your jaw joints.
- **Relax Your Jaw Muscles:** By preventing your upper and lower teeth from fully engaging in harmful ways, your jaw muscles can finally relax, significantly reducing tension, soreness, and



pain.

- **Stabilize Your Jaw Joint (TMJ):** It helps guide your jaw into a more natural, comfortable resting position, minimizing strain and promoting overall joint health.

Together, these actions lead to a more stable bite, reduced pain, and improved chewing and speaking function.

The Benefits of an Occlusal Splint

Choosing an occlusal splint can bring significant improvements to your daily life:

Real Pain Relief & Muscle Relaxation:

Many patients suffering from grinding or TMD experience chronic headaches, jaw pain, and even referred pain in their neck and shoulders. Your custom splint works by significantly reducing the overactivity of your jaw muscles, providing profound relief from these symptoms. This relaxation can extend throughout your body, improving overall comfort and reducing tension.

Easier Chewing & Swallowing:

When your bite is off or your jaw hurts, eating can become a chore. Our occlusal splint helps create a balanced biting surface, making it easier and more comfortable to chew your food properly. This can also lead to smoother swallowing, reducing any compensatory habits you might have developed.

Protecting Your Jaw Joints:

Your temporomandibular joints (TMJs) are crucial for speaking, chewing, and yawning. A splint helps protect these joints from excessive stress and wear, which can lead to long-term issues like cartilage damage. By keeping your jaw in a stable, healthy position, we help ensure your TMJs remain healthy and functional for years to come.

Enhanced Quality of Life:

Chronic pain and difficulty with basic functions can take a significant toll on your well-being. By alleviating these symptoms, an occlusal splint can remarkably improve your sleep quality, reduce



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anxiety, and boost your overall confidence in daily life. Imagine enjoying meals and conversations without constant discomfort!

Our Comprehensive TMJ Treatment Process

At Aesthetic Smile Designs, your journey to lasting relief begins with a thorough and personalized approach. We believe in understanding the root or causes of your symptoms to provide the most effective treatment.

Comprehensive Exam & Diagnosis:

Your initial visit will include a [detailed examination](#) of your teeth, bite, jaw joints, and surrounding muscles. We'll discuss your symptoms, medical history, and lifestyle factors to gain a complete picture of your oral health. This thorough assessment is crucial for an accurate diagnosis.

Advanced CBCT Scan:

To gain unparalleled insight into the condition of your jaw joints (TMJ) and surrounding bone structures, we utilize advanced Cone Beam Computed Tomography ([CBCT](#)) imaging. This state-of-the-art technology provides detailed 3D images, allowing us to precisely evaluate joint alignment, disc position, and any signs of degeneration that may be contributing to your discomfort.

Discussion of Findings & Personalized Solutions:

Once we have gathered all the necessary information, [Dr. Bernie Villadiego](#) will sit down with you to thoroughly explain our findings. We'll show you your CBCT images and other diagnostic records, clearly illustrating what's contributing to your pain. More importantly, we'll discuss all potential solutions tailored to your specific condition.

Implementing Your Solution - Occlusal Splint or Braces:

Based on our detailed diagnosis and your needs, we will recommend the most effective treatment path.

- **Occlusal Splint Therapy:** For many patients, a custom occlusal splint is the ideal initial step to stabilize the jaw joint, relieve muscle tension, and alleviate pain. It acts as a
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foundation to bring your bite into harmony.

- Orthodontic Treatment (Braces): In cases where the underlying issue is a significant malocclusion (misalignment of teeth or jaws), braces may be recommended to permanently correct the bite. An occlusal splint might even be used initially to stabilize the jaw joint *before* orthodontic treatment, or as a complement during the process.

We will always ensure you understand your options and feel confident in the chosen path toward a stable, pain-free smile.

Proven Relief & Lasting Results

The effectiveness of a custom occlusal splint is well-supported by clinical research and, more importantly, by the many patients who have found relief at Aesthetic Smile Designs. Studies consistently show that this splint significantly reduces pain and improves jaw function for a large majority of individuals. We've seen firsthand how this personalized device can lead to dramatic improvements in daily comfort, allowing our patients to chew, speak, and live without constant discomfort.

Ready for Relief? Contact Aesthetic Smile Designs Today!

Don't let teeth grinding, jaw pain, or persistent headaches control your life any longer. A custom occlusal splint offers a non-invasive, highly effective solution to restore comfort and improve your overall well-being. At Aesthetic Smile Designs, we're dedicated to helping you find the right solution for your unique needs. Schedule your consultation today to discuss how an occlusal splint can help you find lasting relief and get back to enjoying life without discomfort.