**TIPS AND TRICKS**

**MOUTH GUARDS**

- Mouth guards should be used by anyone, both children and adults who play contact sports such as football, boxing, soccer, ice hockey, basketball, lacrosse, and field hockey.

- Even those participating in noncontact sports such as gymnastics and any recreational activity such as skateboarding or mountain biking that might pose a risk of injury to the mouth would benefit from wearing a protective mouth guard.

- Accidents can happen during any physical activity and the advantage of using a mouth guard during sports is to help limit the risk of mouth-related injuries to your lips, tongue, and the soft tissues of your mouth.

- Mouth guards also help to avoid chipped or broken teeth, nerve damage to a tooth, or even tooth loss.

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**How To Care for Mouth Guards**

- Rinse your mouth guard with cold water or with a mouth rinse before and after each use and/or clean it with toothpaste and a toothbrush.
- Occasionally clean the mouth guard in cool, soapy water and rinse it thoroughly.
- Place the mouth guard in a firm, perforated container to store or transport it. This permits air circulation and helps to prevent damage.
- Protect the mouth guard from high temperatures -- such as hot water, hot surfaces, or direct sunlight -- to minimize distorting its shape.
- Occasionally check the mouth guard for general wear. If you find holes or tears in it or if it becomes loose or causes discomfort, replace it.
- Bring the mouth guard to each regularly scheduled dental visit to have your dentist exam it.

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