

Sports Mouthguards at Core Dental Epping

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Description:

Sports Mouthguards at Core Dental Epping **Category:** Dental Services **Location:** Tenancy 3B/230 Cooper St, Epping VIC 3076 **Phone:** (03) 9401 4622 --- ## Protect Your Smile on the Field Sp...

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Protect Your Smile on the Field

Sport is a way of life across Melbourne's northern suburbs, and Epping is no exception. From junior AFL at local clubs through to Saturday cricket, basketball at the rec centre, and martial arts training, the sporting community around Epping, South Morang, Mill Park, Lalor, and Thomastown is active, competitive, and passionate.

But sport also carries risk — and dental injuries are among the most common (and most preventable) injuries in contact and collision sports. A properly fitted custom mouthguard is the single most effective way to protect your teeth, gums, jaw, and lips during sport. At Core Dental Epping, our team — Dr Alysha Soltys, Dr Tristan Balthazaar, Dr Marina Ghobrial, and Dr Maria Blanchard — provides professionally fitted, custom-made mouthguards for athletes of all ages and abilities.

Why Mouthguards Matter

The statistics on sports-related dental injuries are striking. According to the Australian Dental Association, around one-third of all dental injuries in Australia are sports-related. A knocked-out, cracked, or broken tooth isn't just painful — it's expensive to fix and can have lifelong consequences.

Consider the potential costs of dental injury without a mouthguard:

- **A single knocked-out tooth** may require an emergency visit, reimplantation or extraction, and eventually a dental implant — total cost often exceeding \$5,000 to \$7,000 over a lifetime - **A fractured tooth** may need root canal treatment and a crown — typically \$2,000 to \$3,000 or more - **Lip and tongue lacerations** from teeth cutting into soft tissue during impact — painful, sometimes requiring stitches - **Jaw fractures** — a serious injury requiring hospital treatment, surgery, and extended recovery - **Concussion risk** — while research is ongoing, there is evidence that mouthguards may help reduce the severity of concussions by absorbing and distributing impact forces

A custom mouthguard typically costs a fraction of what a single dental injury would cost to repair. It's one of the simplest and most cost-effective investments you can make in your or your child's health.

Custom vs Boil-and-Bite — There's No Comparison

Not all mouthguards are created equal. Understanding the difference between a professionally made custom mouthguard and a shop-bought boil-and-bite product is important.

Custom-made mouthguards (professionally fitted)

Custom mouthguards are fabricated in a dental laboratory from a precise impression or digital scan of your teeth. They are made from high-quality, medical-grade materials and are designed to fit your mouth exactly.

****Advantages:****

- ****Superior fit:**** Stays firmly in place without clenching or holding with your teeth — you can breathe, speak, and drink water normally
- ****Optimal protection:**** Even thickness in critical areas provides consistent shock absorption and force distribution
- ****Comfortable:**** Because the fit is precise, custom mouthguards are far more comfortable to wear, which means athletes actually keep them in during play
- ****Durable:**** Higher-quality materials last longer and maintain their shape better than store-bought alternatives
- ****Tailored design:**** Can be adjusted for braces, missing teeth, or specific sporting requirements
- ****Colour options:**** Available in team colours, patterns, or personalised designs — particularly popular with kids and club teams

Boil-and-bite mouthguards (over-the-counter)

Boil-and-bite mouthguards are purchased from pharmacies or sports stores. You soften them in hot water and then bite into them to create a rough impression of your teeth.

****Limitations:****

- ****Poor fit:**** The moulding process is imprecise, resulting in a loose, bulky guard that shifts during play
- ****Reduced protection:**** Uneven thickness means inconsistent shock absorption — thin areas provide little protection
- ****Uncomfortable:**** Bulkiness and poor fit make it difficult to breathe, speak, and drink. Many athletes (especially children) take them out during play, defeating the purpose entirely
- ****Short lifespan:**** The material degrades quickly, requiring frequent replacement
- ****One-size approach:**** Cannot be properly adjusted for braces, dental work, or individual mouth anatomy

Stock mouthguards

The cheapest option — pre-formed plastic guards that come in generic sizes with no customisation at all. These provide minimal protection and are not recommended by any dental or sporting body.

The bottom line

The Australian Dental Association, Sports Medicine Australia, and all major Australian sporting codes recommend custom-fitted mouthguards made by a dental professional. The difference in protection, comfort, and compliance (actually wearing it) is significant.

Sports That Require Mouthguards

While many people associate mouthguards with football, they're essential for a much wider range of sports. Any activity involving physical contact, flying objects, or the risk of falls should include mouthguard use.

High-risk sports (mouthguard strongly recommended or mandatory):

- ****AFL / Australian Rules Football**** — mandatory at all junior levels; standard equipment at senior levels. High risk of elbow, knee, and head contact
- ****Rugby union and rugby league**** — mandatory for

junior players under most state regulations; essential for all levels - **Boxing, kickboxing, and MMA** — mandatory in competition and training - **Hockey (field and ice)** — high risk from sticks, balls, and body contact - **Basketball** — often overlooked, but elbows to the face are common, particularly under the basket - **Cricket** — batters and close-in fielders face hard balls delivered at high speed - **Martial arts (karate, taekwondo, judo)** — strikes and throws create significant dental injury risk - **Lacrosse** — high-speed ball and stick contact

Medium-risk sports (mouthguard recommended):

- **Soccer / football** — aerial challenges and accidental head contact - **Netball** — fast-paced with frequent body contact around the goal - **Baseball / softball** — batters and fielders at risk from balls and bats - **Mountain biking and BMX** — falls onto handlebars and hard ground - **Skateboarding and scootering** — popular among younger children, with frequent falls - **Gymnastics and trampolining** — falls and equipment contact - **Water polo** — aggressive body contact in the water - **Equestrian** — falls from horses

If you're unsure whether your sport warrants a mouthguard, the general rule is: **if there's a risk of contact with another player, a ball, equipment, or the ground, wear a mouthguard.**

The Custom Mouthguard Fitting Process

Getting a custom mouthguard at Core Dental Epping is quick, easy, and typically requires just two short appointments:

Appointment 1: Impressions (approximately 15–20 minutes)

- Your dentist examines your teeth and gums to ensure everything is healthy - A precise impression (mould) of your upper teeth is taken using dental impression material — it's quick and comfortable - We discuss your preferences for colour, design, and any specific sporting requirements - The impression is sent to our dental laboratory, where your mouthguard is fabricated from high-quality, layered EVA (ethylene vinyl acetate) material

Appointment 2: Fitting (approximately 10–15 minutes)

- Your custom mouthguard is tried in and checked for fit, comfort, and bite - Minor adjustments are made if needed to ensure it sits perfectly - We demonstrate proper care and storage - You're ready to play

For team fittings — particularly popular at the start of football, basketball, and hockey seasons — we can arrange group appointments to fit multiple players efficiently. Ask us about team booking options.

Children's Mouthguards

Children are at particularly high risk of dental injury during sport, and their mouthguard needs differ from adults:

- **Growing mouths:** Children's jaws and teeth are constantly changing. A custom mouthguard fitted at the start of the season may not fit properly by the end of it. We recommend checking the fit mid-season and replacing the guard annually — or sooner if it becomes loose, worn, or the child loses or gains teeth. - **Mixed dentition:** Children between roughly ages 6 and 12 have a mix of baby teeth and permanent teeth. Custom mouthguards can be designed to accommodate gaps and emerging teeth. - **Orthodontic considerations:** Children with braces need a specially designed mouthguard that fits over the brackets without causing damage. Custom guards are the only reliable option for braces wearers — boil-and-bite guards cannot accommodate orthodontic appliances effectively. - **Compliance:** The biggest challenge with children is getting them to actually wear the mouthguard. A

comfortable, well-fitting, cool-looking custom guard in their favourite colour or team colours makes a significant difference in compliance. - **CDBS note:** Custom mouthguards are not covered under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule. However, they represent an excellent investment when weighed against the potential cost of treating a dental injury.

Caring for Your Mouthguard

A custom mouthguard will last longer and perform better with proper care:

- **Rinse** with cold or lukewarm water after each use (avoid hot water, which can warp the material) - **Clean** with a toothbrush and mild soap or non-abrasive toothpaste - **Dry** thoroughly before storing - **Store** in the ventilated case provided — never leave it in direct sunlight, a hot car, or a gym bag where it can overheat and lose its shape - **Bring it** to your regular dental check-ups so your dentist can check the fit and condition - **Replace** when it becomes worn, loose, or develops tears. For children, annual replacement is typical. For adults, a well-cared-for mouthguard can last two or more seasons.

Signs it's time for a new mouthguard:

- It feels loose or doesn't stay in place properly - The edges are rough, torn, or thinning - It has an unpleasant odour that doesn't resolve with cleaning - You've had dental work (new fillings, crowns, extractions) that changes the fit - For children: new teeth have come through or baby teeth have fallen out

The Cost Equation — Prevention vs Repair

Custom mouthguards are an investment, but let's put the cost in perspective:

- **Custom mouthguard:** A fraction of the cost of dental repair work - **Emergency dental visit for a knocked-out tooth:** Several hundred dollars for the initial visit alone - **Root canal treatment + crown:** \$2,000–\$3,000+ - **Dental implant to replace a lost tooth:** \$4,000–\$6,000+ - **Lifetime cost of managing a lost front tooth** (implant, potential replacement implant, ongoing maintenance): \$7,000–\$15,000+

A single dental injury can cost tens of times what a custom mouthguard costs. Beyond the financial argument, there's the pain, the time off sport and school or work, the aesthetic impact (particularly for front teeth), and the emotional distress — especially for children.

Every dollar spent on a custom mouthguard is a dollar invested in preventing what could be a life-changing and very expensive injury.

Epping's Sporting Community

Epping and the surrounding suburbs of South Morang, Mill Park, Lalor, Thomastown, and Wollert are home to a thriving sporting community. Local clubs, school sports programs, and recreational leagues keep thousands of children and adults active throughout the year.

Core Dental Epping is proud to support the local sporting community by providing high-quality protective dental equipment. Whether your child is pulling on the footy boots for their first Auskick season, your teenager is playing representative basketball, or you're lacing up for a Saturday afternoon cricket match, we're here to keep your smile safe.

We encourage local sporting clubs, schools, and associations to reach out about team fitting sessions — particularly at the start of the winter and summer sport seasons.

Book a Mouthguard Appointment

The best time to get a custom mouthguard is before the season starts — but it's never too late to protect your teeth. Contact Core Dental Epping to arrange your fitting.

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Two quick appointments. One custom-fitted mouthguard. A lifetime of protection for your smile.