

Guard Your Smile

This will be an oral presentation

ABSTRACT: Dental injury is the most common type of sports related head and neck injury, accounting for over one third of all oral-facial injuries. While significant progress has been made in this area, dental professionals should do more to promote injury prevention for patients participating in a variety of sports. One way to reduce risk is to wear a mouth guard. The use of this oral appliance decreases the possibility of cranial and oral facial trauma. It is more than just chipping a tooth. A greater risk of injury to gingival tissues and supporting bone structure exists. Concussions and other neurologic injuries are an additional concern. Based on a review of current research, this presentation will address the nature of various injuries as well as the advantages and disadvantages of available appliances. Identified barriers to mouth guard use will be reported. In addition, our goal is to increase awareness within the medical and dental community and the general public about the need to recommend and comply with mouth guard use in sports. Conclusions from this research investigation highlight the value of increased mouth guard use as a means of decreasing the incidence and prevalence of orofacial or neurologic injury.