

**April is National Facial Protection Month
And
SQUADRON BLVD PEDIATRIC DENTIST SAYS MOUTH GUARDS
CAN PROTECT KIDS FROM SPORTS INJURIES**

New City, NY, April 01, 2014 – More than 3.5 million children age 14 and under are injured every year while playing baseball, skateboarding and participating in other sports and recreational activities according to the American Dental Association. They add that an alarming percentage of these injuries are to the teeth, lips, tongue, face or jaw.

As a New City Pediatric Dentist, I want parents to know that by making a simple and inexpensive addition to their children's sports equipment, they can protect their kids from much painful and potentially serious face, mouth, and head injuries.

You wouldn't send your child into a soccer game without shin guards or into a hockey game without a helmet, and the use of a mouth guard should be regular practice in every sport.

Most adults think of mouth guards only for high contact sports such as football and hockey, face and mouth injuries are just as likely to occur in sports like gymnastics, basketball, baseball, lacrosse, karate, skateboarding and bike riding. One survey showed that most parents perceived little need for mouth guards in basketball, baseball or soccer and yet of total injuries reported in the survey, nearly 20 percent occurred in basketball, 17 percent in baseball and 11 percent in soccer.

I've seen several dental injuries from basketball and it's usually from an elbow to the mouth. Any time you have potential contact with another person or surface, you will have accidents resulting in broken teeth, gum and tongue injuries, jaw fractures and even more serious trauma to the head and neck. Mouth guards can actually help to prevent concussions and head injuries by preventing a chain reaction that can occur when injuries in the oral cavity travel upwards into the brain.

Mouth guards are available in several options -- from the off-the-shelf type that is boiled and molded to fit to customized guards made by a Pediatric Dentist that ensure a proper fit. I feel, that while any mouth guard is better than none, the options offer varying degrees of comfort and protection. If your child is in orthodontic treatment check with your Orthodontist about using a mouth guard.

One of the most critical factors here is fit. A properly fitted mouth guard will be comfortable, and will not inhibit speech or breathing or make the child feel nauseous. When it feels okay, your child will be much more likely to wear it.

Parents should also be aware that mouth guards need to be replaced frequently as kids grow. Children under 15 typically need their mouth guard replaced or modified every 12 to 18 months. Even high school and college-aged kids require new mouth guards periodically because they are still experiencing growth changes to their mouths and teeth.

My advice is that a mouth guard is a simple piece of protective equipment that can make a critical difference if an injury is sustained to the mouth or face. Nobody wants to miss half of their game to spend Saturday afternoon at the Dentist's office or emergency room. By taking this simple, protective step this scenario is a lot less likely to materialize.

Fern Cytryn, D.D.S. provides pediatric dentistry with a smile. "Dr. Red," as she is called in honor of her hair, provides comprehensive Pediatric Dental care for children from infancy through young adulthood. Her office is located at 16 Squadron Blvd, New City, NY. For more information about Dr. Cytryn's practice, please call 845-634-3200 or visit www.drfernsmile.com.