

# Posterior Bite Collapse

## • What is posterior bite collapse? Why should someone be concerned about posterior bite support?

The best way that we have heard it described is that there are three things which work as a system in the lower head and neck region. They are:

- Facial Muscles
- Jaw Joint (Temporomandibular Joint)
- Teeth

If there is ever a problem with one of these segments, then we will see problems with the other two segments (i.e. broken teeth due to biting too hard, or worn teeth due to overactive muscles).

The posterior teeth are designed to take 800-1000 pound of pressure during chewing and the anterior teeth 100-200 pound of pressure.

Our posterior teeth help support our Lower Jaw at a certain dimension in relation to the Upper Jaw and Jaw Joint.

Over time, and for various reasons (i.e. tooth loss, broken teeth, large fillings, etc.) we may lose some of this support from the posterior teeth. If this starts to happen, then we will start to compensate by distributing the forces of chewing to the anterior teeth. This will again start to have an effect on the other segments of the system such as overactive muscles and jaw joint problems.

In other words, once we have deterioration of the bite and posterior tooth support, the likelihood of multiple other "tooth related" problems occurring increases.

This is why it is better to address the basic problems of posterior tooth support before the side effects arise.

We attempt to "better the bite" each time we perform a crown or filling procedure to achieve the most optimal posterior support as possible! So it may be normal if we ask you to come back for adjustments within a week or so.

## Helpful Hints

Bruxism can develop at any age. Many patients are unaware that they are grinding their teeth because it often happens while they sleep. They may wake with a headache, toothache, earache or a sore face. Grinding can wear away or fracture tooth enamel and may eventually loosen teeth.

Grinding and clenching are common occurrences for many people at some time or another. If you suspect that you are routinely grinding your teeth, please talk with us about protecting your smile.

When everyday stress seems to be a major cause of bruxism, it may be helpful to find ways to relax—listening to music, reading a book, taking a walk or a warm bath. Applying a warm, wet washcloth to the side of the face may help relax muscles sore from clenching.

## Recipe

### Pineapple Spinach Whirl

- 8 oz. pineapple juice
- 1 cup washed raw spinach leaves
- fluffed ice

Whirl in the blender. If there are open wounds in the mouth, substitute apple juice or a mild nectar for the pineapple juice.