

## ORTHOTIC HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Dr. Scott Sahf's cell phone: 828-243-9121

**TO REMOVE:** Lift both sides of your orthotic at the same time. Lifting one side first could cause it to crack or break.

**TO REPLACE:** Center your teeth in the orthotic and push into place with your fingers. Be sure to push both sides down at the same time.

**TO CLEAN:** Remove the orthotic when you brush your teeth, and brush it with your toothpaste. To remove odor and stain, soak the orthotic in any of the following solutions and then brush it again with your toothpaste.

1. 2 tablespoons baking soda in ½ cup tap water for 20 minutes.
2. Tap water and a denture cleanser such as Polident or Efferdent for approximately 15 minutes.
3. Some type of mouth rinse – preferably a non-alcohol one such Crest ProHealth (Wal-Mart).

**NOTE:** Putting your orthotic in very hot water will cause it to warp. However, as long as your orthotic is in position in your mouth, hot food or drink will not damage it.

### **SPECIAL NOTES:**

1. You may initially experience an increase in symptoms immediately after being fitted with your orthotic. However, you should soon feel much better. If you have no improvement after 2-3 days, please call us. You may have had a dramatic change in your muscles and require an adjustment in your orthotic. Remember that it has taken years to get you to the current state of pathology and it will take some time for your body to heal. It won't happen overnight for most patients.
2. **WEAR YOUR ORTHOTIC AT ALL TIMES, AS INSTRUCTED.** If instructed to wear it while eating, it may take some time to get comfortable doing so. Start with well ground meats and soft vegetables (i.e. potatoes), pasta, yogurts and soups. Eliminate hard foods such as peanuts, raw vegetables, candy, gum and ice cubes. This will be an adjustment but can be accomplished with patience and commitment.
3. You will find you may have either increased saliva or a dry mouth until you become accustomed to wearing your orthotic. Relax and be patient.
4. The best way to learn to speak with your orthotic is to do so. It may take several days to become accustomed to speaking with it, and it may be helpful for you to stand in front of a mirror to practice enunciating your words slowly. Don't be afraid to slowly exaggerate the enunciation of your words. But remember, you will think you notice the orthotic feeling or sounding different much more than other people will.
5. At all times, try to keep your mouth in the rest position., lips together and teeth slightly apart with your tongue on the roof of your mouth. Your teeth should only touch the orthotic when you eat or swallow. The rest position helps reduce the workload on your temporomandibular joints, relax the muscles, and teach yourself not to clench or grind your teeth.
6. If your orthotic becomes damaged or breaks, call our office immediately.
7. If sore spots or canker sores develop inside your mouth, call us so we may eliminate the source of the sores. Warm salt water rinses or Peroxyl rinse can be used until you get to the office.
8. If dental work needs to be performed, be sure to take some breaks during the procedure. Refrain from opening as wide as you can to avoid stretching or straining your muscles and ligaments. Continue your routine dental appointments and the use of neutral Sodium Fluoride rinse or gel on a daily basis is encouraged.
9. If general anesthesia is scheduled, make sure you advise the anesthesiologist that you currently are (or have in the past) undergoing TMJ treatment and take extreme precautions to limit the opening of the mouth pre and post-operatively during the procedure.
10. **Keep your orthotic away from your pets (dogs, cats, etc.) because they love to chew them!**

**IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL OUR OFFICE. WE WANT TO HELP YOU ADJUST TO ALL PHASES OF YOUR TREATMENT.**