



CUSTOM ORAL APPLIANCE THERAPY HOME CARE MAINTENANCE **INSTRUCTIONS**

During custom oral appliance therapy, you may become aware of slight changes in your bite or may experience slight soreness in the muscles of your jaw and neck area. Be aware of these changes and write them down as they occur and report them to Dr. Vandervelden or our staff. These reports help us to calibrate your device to make it most comfortable and effective.

Home maintenance of your Custom Oral Appliance:

Proper home maintenance of your custom oral appliance will prevent odor and can increase the longevity of the appliance.

- 1) For cleaning and odor protection you may purchase over the counter denture cleaner tablets and let your custom oral appliance soak all day. We recommend you use this product daily. Be sure to rinse your custom oral appliance thoroughly before using to be sure all of the denture cleaner is rinsed off.

****Do not use denture cleaner tablets if you have a sulfate allergy. If you have a sulfate allergy, check the contents of the denture cleaner and consider consulting with your Dr. before using.***

- 2) Or, each morning, you can brush your custom oral appliance with a toothbrush and toothpaste. Rinse thoroughly with water and brush with a clean toothbrush to avoid buildup. Allow to fully dry before placing in its case or store it in the case with the case lid open to allow for drying.
- 3) A high source of heat can damage your custom oral appliance. Keep the appliance out of the sun and heat. Please be sure to keep your custom oral appliance out of any extreme temperatures.
- 4) A case is being provided to you for storage of your custom oral appliance. When not using the appliance, it should remain in the storage case to avoid being lost or damaged. Keep away from pets. We also recommend you keep the case and your custom oral appliance out of reach of pets.
- 5) When inserting your appliance, **DO NOT** bite the appliance in place. Place with fingers only! Biting the appliance into place can damage it or your teeth.
- 6) **How to use the morning repositioner each day to verify that your bite is back in the normal position:** After you remove your custom oral appliance, **wait 30 minutes** to allow your jaw muscles to relax, then use your morning repositioner. *(Do not use the repositioner right after removing your appliance in the morning). Your joint space is filled with fluid and it takes that 30 minute time frame for the fluid to diffuse out of the joint space. If you force your teeth together with the re-positioner right after removing the appliance you can cause joint damage (although this is extremely rare).* Place the morning repositioner in your mouth, find the correct tooth position and bite down **gently**. Then, **squeeze gently for 5**

seconds and release. Repeat until the back teeth touch. This can be done as many times as you would like. **Avoid biting or squeezing too hard.**

- 7) For the first few nights, you can put your appliance in an hour before you go to bed. You can also wear it off and on during the day as needed to get used to it.
- 8) It is normal to experience some tooth soreness or overall snugness of the appliance as you are getting used to your custom oral appliance. If the soreness is general, give it a couple days to subside. If one tooth or one area is sore, then it is most likely a fit issue, and we will need to see you to adjust your custom oral appliance.
- 9) If your jaw becomes uncomfortable, start taking ibuprofen (if medically able) for a couple days to help with the inflammation.
- 10) If it becomes necessary for you to have major dental work (crowns, bridges, implants), we recommend seeing a dentist who is trained to retrofit the restorations to your custom oral appliance. The appliances are custom made and the fit on the teeth is not adjustable. You can contact our office and we will recommend a crown specialist. Should you wish to see another dentist for the restorations, we recommend a scanner be used in order to aid with the fit. *Please be aware that not all dentists are trained to retrofit major restorations to the custom oral appliances and by having the work done by a dentist not trained to retrofit these restorations, you are risking that the appliance will not fit properly and may require the oral appliance to be remade (which will incur an additional fee).*
- 11) If you have major restorations done by a dentist not recommended by our office and experience **ANY** fit issues **PLEASE DO NOT** allow the dentist to make adjustments to the custom oral appliance. Please return to our office so that our team can make adjustments or evaluate the fit of your appliance. *Adjustments made by anyone other than West Michigan CPAP Alternatives may damage the appliance and cause improper fit and may necessitate the need for a replacement oral appliance (which will incur an additional fee).*
- 12) If major dental restorations are completed and are not retrofitted just so, it will likely require replacing your custom oral appliance. Only minor adjustments to the precision fit oral appliance can be made, so it's important to get your major dental restorations done by a qualified dentist that can precisely retrofit major work. We can help connect you to a qualified dentist. Please call our office for assistance.
- 13) We recommend replacing your custom oral appliance after 5 years to avoid injury. These appliances are tough and durable, but after 5 years of usage your appliance has been in your mouth an average of 12,775 hours (assuming 7 hours of usage per night). That is a lot of hours! The risk of your appliance breaking in your mouth while you sleep goes up significantly after 5 years. If a broken piece should find its way into your windpipe, this can result in serious injury. Signs your appliance may need to be replaced prior to the 5 year mark may include a very loose appliance that is no longer stabilizing or splinting your lower jaw (this usually only occurs in patients who frequently clench down on their appliance while they sleep which accelerates the degradation of your appliance).

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please call our office at 616-741-9035.