

Clenching and Grinding Affects More Than Teeth: A New Treatment Option

by Joe Pelerin, DDS

Over 30 years ago I began to experience shoulder pain, neck pain and migraine headaches which were so bad that I had an MRI taken. No cause was evident for this problem. Even as a dentist, I was not aware of clenching or grinding my teeth. Finally, I designed myself a splint, and my shoulder, neck pain and headaches disappeared.

How can clenching or grinding cause neck and headache pain? I've experienced that phenoma when I injured a muscle in my chest; within hours the pain traveled to my

back as the muscles had a reflex contraction. I've also experienced the reverse, hurting my back and 12 hours later abdominal muscles reacted with contraction. I call this MRC (Musculoskeletal Reflex Contraction).

I have personally worn many types of appliances and have treated thousands of patients over the past 30+ years. The first appliance that I designed and used was the traditional "horseshoe", lab-fabricated appliance. These appliances can be bulky and hard to wear – and can increase muscle activity.

As I investigated, the NTI device appeared as the benchmark; it could reduce "bad" muscle activity by 60%, and it was often able to reduce migraine headache in 80+% of a test group. However, its design causes only the front few teeth to be in contact, and this does not suit certain occlusions, especially Class 2/long centric.

More than 10 years ago I designed the GrindreliefN (N = Night), and it covers the upper or lower anteriors. With the jaw retruded, some bicuspid occlusion exists, but as the patient moves forward into excursions, pressure is put on a front Central Power Bar. This bar creates pressure on the upper and lower mid-line at the same time. Therefore, my device has twice as many beneficial features as other tension suppression appliances.

Now GrindreliefN is available to you, the dentist, in bulk discount, to purchase and deliver to the patient. The clinician can charge the fee of a typical splint, or any fee that is appropriate. There are several CDT insurance codes available, and it has been very profitable for my practice. Patients presenting in the middle of a busy day with muscle pain – within 5 minutes you have them in a splint and getting better.

We also sell this device directly to patients, if you prefer to "prescribe" it.

I will be glad to answer any inquiries about the product at the same website www.grindreliefn.com. 

As many as 1-in-3 patients suffer from some form of bruxism.



Joe Pelerin, DDS, is the inventor of GrindReliefN and the founder of Grind Guard Technologies, LLC. As a patient and former sufferer of bruxism, Dr. Pelerin knew there was a need for a small, reformable, low cost, FDA cleared device to stop teeth grinding and teeth clenching at night.