

Dental Clinical Policy: Occlusal Guards

Reference Number: CP.DP.34

Last Review Date: 12/23

[Coding Implications](#)

[Revision Log](#)

See [Important Reminder](#) at the end of this policy for important regulatory and legal information.

Description

Occlusal Guards are removable dental appliances designed to minimize effects of bruxism or other occlusal factors. Occlusal Guards may be constructed of hard or soft material and may cover an entire or partial arch.

Policy/Criteria

- I. It is the policy of Envolve Dental Inc.® that an occlusal guard is **medically necessary** when any of the following conditions are met:
 - A. When a patient exhibits signs and symptoms of bruxism or clenching of teeth that causes excessive occlusal wear or multiple fractures of natural teeth or restorations;
 - B. When multiple porcelain or ceramic restorations oppose natural teeth and have the potential to cause enamel wear;
 - C. Does not have any of the following contraindications:
 - 1. When treating temporomandibular disorders or myofascial pain dysfunction;
 - 2. When used for orthodontic tooth movement.
 - D. Required documentation to support medical necessity include the following:
 - 1. Clinical chart, treatment notes, and treatment plan documenting proposed course of treatment and conditions listed in the indications for use of Occlusal Guards;
 - 2. Diagnostic photographic images and/or radiographs demonstrating conditions requiring occlusal guard(s).

Coverage Limitation/Exclusions

- I. One occlusal guard per member per 36 months
- II. Subject to state-specific regulations.

Coding Implications

This clinical policy references Current Dental Terminology (CDT®). CDT® is a registered trademark of the American Dental Association. All CDT codes and descriptions are copyrighted 2023, American Dental Association. All rights reserved. CDT codes and CDT descriptions are from the current manuals and those included herein are not intended to be all-inclusive and are included for informational purposes only. Codes referenced in this clinical policy are for informational purposes only. Inclusion or exclusion of any codes does not guarantee coverage. Providers should reference the most up-to-date sources of professional coding guidance prior to the submission of claims for reimbursement of covered services.

CDT® Codes	Description
D9942	Repair and/or reline of occlusal guard
D9943	Occlusal guard adjustment
D9944	Occlusal guard – hard appliance, full arch

CDT® Codes	Description
D9945	Occlusal guard – soft appliance, full arch
D9946	Occlusal guard – hard appliance, partial arch
D9950	Occlusal analysis – mounted case
D9951	Occlusal adjustment - limited
D9952	Occlusal adjustment - complete

ICD-10-CM Diagnosis Codes that Support Coverage Criteria

ICD-10-CM Code	Description
K03.0	Excessive attrition of teeth
K03.81	Cracked tooth
K03.89	Other specified diseases of hard tissues of teeth
K08.530	Fractured dental restorative material without loss of material
K08.531	Fractured dental restorative material with loss of material
K08.539	Fractured dental restorative material, unspecified
K08.81	Primary occlusal trauma
K08.82	Secondary occlusal trauma
M26.54	Insufficient anterior guidance
M26.55	Centric occlusion maximum intercuspation discrepancy
M26.56	Non-working side interference
M26.57	Lack of posterior occlusal support
S02.5	Fracture of tooth (traumatic)

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	Approval Date
Policy developed	6/20	6/20
Annual Review	12/22	12/22
Annual Review and Format Change	12/23	12/23

References

1. American Dental Association. CDT 2023: Dental Procedure Codes. American Dental Association, 2023.
2. Becker, IM. Comprehensive occlusal concepts in clinical practice. Wiley-Blackwell 2011.
3. Haywood, VB, and Bachand, W. Occlusal disease: The silent destroyer. Retrieved from: <https://success.ada.org/en/practice-management/dental-practice-success/summer-2016/occlusal-disease>. Accessed on June 19, 2020 (requires ADA membership).

Important Reminder

This clinical policy has been developed by appropriately experienced and licensed health care professionals based on a review and consideration of currently available generally accepted

DENTAL CLINICAL POLICY

Occlusal Guards

standards of dental practice; peer-reviewed dental/medical literature; government agency/program approval status; evidence-based guidelines and positions of leading national dental and health professional organizations; views of dentists practicing in relevant clinical areas affected by this clinical policy; and other available clinical information. Envolve Dental makes no representations and accepts no liability with respect to the content of any external information used or relied upon in developing this clinical policy. This clinical policy is consistent with standards of dental practice current at the time that this clinical policy was approved. “Envolve Dental” means a dental plan that has adopted this clinical policy and that is operated or administered, in whole or in part, by Envolve Benefit Options, Inc, or any of such health plan’s affiliates, as applicable.

The purpose of this clinical policy is to provide a guide to dental and medical necessity, which is a component of the guidelines used to assist in making coverage decisions and administering benefits. It does not constitute a contract or guarantee regarding payment or results. Coverage decisions and the administration of benefits are subject to all terms, conditions, exclusions and limitations of the coverage documents (e.g., evidence of coverage, certificate of coverage, policy, contract of insurance, etc.), as well as to state and federal requirements and applicable Envolve Dental administrative policies and procedures.

This clinical policy is effective as of the date determined by Envolve Dental. The date of posting may not be the effective date of this clinical policy. This clinical policy may be subject to applicable legal and regulatory requirements relating to provider notification. If there is a discrepancy between the effective date of this clinical policy and any applicable legal or regulatory requirement, the requirements of law and regulation shall govern. Envolve Dental retains the right to change, amend or withdraw this clinical policy, and additional clinical policies may be developed and adopted as needed, at any time.

This clinical policy does not constitute dental or medical advice, dental treatment or dental care. It is not intended to dictate to providers how to practice dentistry. Providers are expected to exercise professional dental and medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care, and are solely responsible for the dental and medical advice and treatment of members. This clinical policy is not intended to recommend treatment for members. Members should consult with their treating dentist in connection with diagnosis and treatment decisions.

Providers referred to in this clinical policy are independent contractors who exercise independent judgment and over whom Envolve Dental has no control or right of control. Providers are not agents or employees of Envolve Dental.

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DENTAL CLINICAL POLICY Occlusal Guards



Note: For Medicaid members, when state Medicaid coverage provisions conflict with the coverage provisions in this clinical policy, state Medicaid coverage provisions take precedence. Please refer to the state Medicaid manual for any coverage provisions pertaining to this clinical policy.

Note: For Medicare members, to ensure consistency with the Medicare National Coverage Determinations (NCD) and Local Coverage Determinations (LCD), all applicable NCDs, LCDs, and Medicare Coverage Articles should be reviewed prior to applying the criteria set forth in this clinical policy. Refer to the CMS website at <http://www.cms.gov> for additional information.

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