

LEASIDE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION



Mouthguards: It Pays to Wear the Best

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Dental Centres offer rebate to minor hockey teams in quest to improve protection and safety for all participants.

Smart parents know that mouthguards are both a critical piece of protect equipment – and in many cases a mandatory one - for their kids to wear all season. Yet very few know why investing in a properly-made & properly-fitted mouthguard is a wise investment.

Well, here's news that should bring a smile to your face. Altima Dental Centres, a local chain of dental clinics, is putting its money where your child's mouth is. For a limited time, they are offering a pressure-laminated mouthguard made from a cast model of a player's mouth for \$75. Moreover, the company will donate \$10 back to your team or your league.

While the price tag may seem a bit high for a mouthguard, there is increasing evidence to suggest it's money well spent. There are four basic types of mouthguards. The cheapest guards are the in-stock (ready-made) variety offering a generic fit and little comfort, protection or durability. Boil and bite (mouth-formed) guards are those softened in boiling water, then bit down on to create a quasi-custom fit. Heating, the plastic, however, reduces the longevity of the mouthguard. Vacuum-formed mouthguards are made from a single layer of plastic formed on a cast model of the user's teeth, providing moderate protection and durability.

Altima Smartguards, on the other hand, are produced by pressure-forming multiple layers of European plastics, each shaped separately over a cast model of the user's teeth. According to the Journal of Athletic Training (2001), pressure-laminated mouthguards provide excellent fit, protection superior durability and can be customized to fit braces or different mouth sizes.

More importantly, a properly-fitted mouthguard can play a role in preventing concussions which occur when the upper and lower teeth slam together. "Mouthguards act like a cushion, helping to absorb the impact of a blow more evenly," said Dr. George Christodoulou, Altima Dental Canada President and co-CEO. "Not only do they lower the risk of broken teeth, but they also play a role in preventing concussions. Every hockey player should wear a custom-fitted mouthguard."

Each mouthguard is custom made, involving a couple of visits to a local clinic. The first visit involves taking an impression of the player's mouth, from which the final pressure-laminated plastic guard is formed. A second visit focuses on the fit, with adjustments made by a certified dental professional.

So your player gets a top quality product that fits right and offers the utmost in protection. Now, here's what Good Game considers the real kicker. Altima can print logos and colours of any team over three sections of each mouthguard – left, right and centre! This bonus feature just adds to the overall appeal. The team colours and logos make the kids want to wear them.

Sounds like an offer every player can really sink their teeth into.

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