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PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY & ORTHODONTICS

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Bruxism

Bruxism (grinding the teeth and clenching the jaw) is fairly common among toddlers. About 15 percent of children grind their teeth, mainly between ages three and ten.

Many people think stress is to blame. Others theorize that grinding is genetic or that it gives kids a way to work off excess energy. Bruxism may also be a sign that a child's upper and lower jaw aren't aligned properly. Children with allergies are three times more likely to grind their teeth than other kids. The pressure that grinding places on the jaws appears to relieve the itching, sneezing and coughing associated with hay fever. Also you may see children grinding their teeth more if they are sick.

Bruxism usually disappears when the permanent teeth emerge, and it rarely causes long-term damage. If you suspect your child's grinding is a result from stress, try making their bedtime ritual more peaceful and relaxed by adding an extra story or giving him/her a chance to talk about any fears and anxieties. Our doctors will look at the condition of your child's teeth to detect if there are any unusual wear patterns.