



Immediate Release

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Wrong Choice!

The latest (July 2002) edition of the Australian Consumers' Association magazine, *Choice*, contains information which could result in negative outcomes for consumers, according to the Australian Dental Association (ADA) and Sports Medicine Australia (SMA).

"The review of Mouthguards available to sports participants contains information which is misleading and contains inaccuracies. If unchallenged, these will undoubtedly result in more dental traumatic injury that is immediate, permanent and distressing," Dr John Banky, from SMA said.

"A comfortable mouthguard fits well, not dislodging on impact," Dr Banky said. "An effective mouthguard provides adequate thickness of material to reduce impact forces. These qualities can be found with custom-fitted mouthguards, but cannot be guaranteed by the 'boil and bite' style mouthguards described in the *Choice* review."

Dr Robert Butler, Executive Director of the ADA, contradicted the assertion made by *Choice* that: "*there are no real-life studies to prove (custom-fitted mouthguards) are better than 'boil and bites'*".

"The important relationship between fit, thickness and effectiveness is quoted in numerous dental studies," Dr Butler said. (*Oikarinen & Salonen Endodontics Dental Traumatology 1993, Johnson & Messer Endodontics Dental Traumatology 1996, Guevara, Hondrum & Reichl General Dentistry 2001*), The International Academy for Sports Dentistry Position Statement for "A Properly Fitted Mouthguard" (6th December 1998) and more recent sports medicine studies (*Cummins & Spears, Medicine & Science Sports Exercise 2002*).

"Only a custom-fitted mouthguard can accommodate the unique arrangement and number of teeth but also ensure adequate thickness of material protects the vulnerable areas," Dr Butler said. "This simple and fundamental concept should have been clearly conveyed by *Choice*."

The Australian Dental Association and Sports Medicine Australia believe that custom-fitted mouthguards should be worn by all contact sport participants as the most effective means of reducing the severity of dental injuries."

**For additional Comment: Dr Robert Butler 02 9906 4412 0419 207 943
Dr John Banky 03 9528 4359 0417 576 454**

PO Box 237, Dickson ACT 2602
Telephone (02) 6230 4650 Facsimile (02) 6230 5908
E-mail smanat@sma.org.au

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