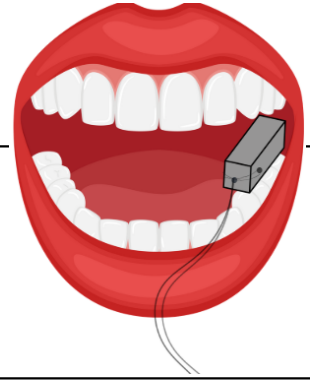


Bite Blocks



What is it?

- A bite block is a small block held between the upper and lower molars during speech therapy.
- It can be made out of hard rubber, dental impression compound, or plastic. The material must be safe to be in your mouth.

Who benefits from using a bite block?

- Clients with persistent speech sound disorders.
- Clients with a slow rate of progress using other approaches (i.e. sound shaping, auditory training).
- Clients who are unable to achieve independent tongue movements because of their excessive jaw movements.
- Clients who would benefit from increasing their awareness of their tongue, teeth, and jaw movements and how they relate to speech.

What is the purpose of a bite block?

- The bite block keeps the jaw stable so the tongue and lips can move independently to increase their repertoire of movements.

Is it safe to use a bite block?

- The bite block is safe to use as directed by your Speech Language Pathologist. Guidelines are as follows:
 - Examine the bite block prior to each use:
 - if cracked/chipped discontinue use and replace bite block
 - ensure string is intact - if string is loose, replace string and/or bite block
 - Hold on to string at all times during use.
 - Only use the bite block when seated or standing in front of a mirror.
 - Do not walk or run around with the bite block in your mouth.
 - Children must be supervised at all times during use. Bite blocks are a choking hazard.
 - If the bite block causes pain (i.e. TMJ) discontinue use.
- The bite block is not appropriate for clients who cannot follow directions and are unwilling/unable to hold bite block safely in their mouths. Use your clinical judgement when recommending a bite block.
 - A bite block stick is a safe alternative (i.e., stacked tongue depressors, handle of a wooden spoon)

Size

- Bite blocks are approximately 1/3 to 1/2 of the client's maximal interincisor space.
- Typical size: child - 5-8mm and adult - 8-10mm.

Care

- Wash the bite block with warm water and soap and dry after each use.
- Store the bite block in a safe place away from young children and pets.

Replacement

- Bite blocks experience wear and tear after repeated use. A replacement bite block may be needed if cracked/chipped.
 - Bite blocks typically need replacement after 2-3 months of daily use.