

RETAINERS

Congratulations. You have successfully finished the fixed brace treatment and your teeth are nice and straight.

Now that you have retainers you may have some questions you would like answered.

Retainers are designed to keep your teeth straight and are removable. Now that your teeth are straight, if you do not wear your retainer, your teeth are likely to drift towards their original position. If this happens it may be difficult if not impossible to correct.

How long will I have to wear the retainers?

This will vary according to how your teeth originally looked before the orthodontic treatment was started. However, as a general rule you will be asked to wear a removable retaining appliance for at least 12 months. This may mean wearing it at night for the first 6 months, before going onto every other night time wear. You will be advised if long term wear is required.

How might the retainer affect me?

Your speech will be different. Practice speaking with the brace in place e.g. read out loud at home on your own, and in this way your speech will return to normal within a couple of days. You may also find yourself swallowing a-lot to begin with. This is quite normal and will quickly pass.

Can I eat normally?

Take the retainers out at meal times and avoid:

- Eating sugary things such as cakes, biscuits, and sweets etc in between meals
- Fizzy drinks, including diet drinks, or excessive amounts of fruit juice

What about tooth brushing?

It is important you brush well three times per day and use fluoride toothpaste. If possible carry a brush with you for use after lunch/meals. Take the brace out to clean your teeth. You should gently brush the brace, taking care not to damage the wires. A daily fluoride mouth rinse should be used last thing at night, after tooth brushing. Failure to keep your teeth clean will lead to permanent scarring of your teeth.

Can I remove the brace?

Yes. The brace is removable and it should only be removed for eating and cleaning. When it is not in your mouth it should be in its protective box. Do not click the brace in and out with your tongue as this can cause the brace to break. If the retainer can't be worn because it is being repaired your teeth may not remain straight.

How often will I need an appointment?

You will not need an appointment so often now the retainers are in place. You will be advised about this. Please bring your retainers to every visit.

Do I need to see my regular dentist?

Yes. It is a good idea to visit your regular dentist now that you are wearing retainers since it will be easier to check your teeth for decay. This is particularly so if your previous brace was fixed to your teeth.

What do I do if I play contact sports?

You should obtain a new gum shield now you are in retention.

What do I do if my retainers break?

Ring up for an appointment as soon as is reasonably possible. Do not wait for your next routine appointment as your teeth may move whilst not wearing your retainers. The daytime telephone number you should contact if a breakage occurs is:

0207 473 4411