

ORTHODONTIC RETAINERS

PURPOSE

The purpose of a retainer is to hold the teeth in their newly aligned positions after the braces are removed. It is important to know that your teeth will be under pressure to move back to where they used to be due to the “memory” of the gum tissue. This occurs whether or not one has had braces and is due to biting pressure. Thus retainers are very important to minimize any movement that could take place.

WHEN & HOW LONG

Your teeth are going to want to move the most in the first 12 months after your braces come off. To prevent this, retainers should be worn on a full-time basis until directed otherwise. Only take them out to eat, brush, and when active in sports.

Permanent retainers remain in your mouth for life.

CARE

Brush them thoroughly at least once a day, preferably with a soft toothbrush, toothpaste, and lukewarm (not hot!) water. An occasional 5 minute soak in your favorite mouthwash will keep them fresh smelling. Also, if you find that tartar is building up on your retainer, soak it for 20 – 30 minutes in white vinegar and water and then brush thoroughly. You can also soak the retainer in water with a denture tablet.

If a wire gets bent or the plastic becomes cracked or broken, please call for an appointment immediately! Teeth can shift rapidly and a significant delay may cause tooth movement that requires retreatment.

Remember to floss under your permanent retainer. If it becomes loose or broken please call!

SPEECH

You may find yourself lisping at first; this is temporary until your tongue learns to adapt to them. Reading out loud for 5 to 10 minutes at night for the first week will help immensely.

AVOID

Do not eat or chew gum while wearing your retainers and avoid flipping them around with your tongue. These activities will weaken the retainer and make them more prone to breakage. Avoid placing your retainers in hot water or on a hot surface, this can warp the appliance so that it won't fit. Also, make sure you don't leave your retainer in any area that is accessible to a household pet. Pets are attracted to the retainer because of the smell of saliva. **When your retainer is not in your mouth it should be in the case provided.**

INVISIBLE RETAINERS

If you drink anything other than water, take the retainer out. Coffee, tea, colas, or any other substance with a strong coloring can stain the retainer, and anything with sugar in it can get in the retainer and cause cavities. If you're not able to take it out, rinse the retainer and your mouth out with water.

LOST

These are the most popular ways that retainers are lost:

1. Wrapped up in a napkin and thrown out at a fast food restaurant or cafeteria.
2. Eaten by the family pet (man's best friend?)
3. Dislodged while swimming (leave out during water sports)

.... So be Careful, and use the case provided!

REPLACEMENT COST

In the case that a retainer is lost or broken, there will be a \$247.00 fee for a replacement retainer. Along with that fee, the patient is asked to write a fictional story about how the retainer was lost/broken and bring a snack for the office. If there is a need for a replacement bonded retainer, the fee is also \$247.00. Lost retainer fee is subject to change.

RETAINER FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS

After your braces are removed, we will expect to see you during your retention phase of treatment to check your retainers. We'll need to see you in 3, 6, 12, and 24 months. Please be sure to schedule these visits!

Now that your braces are off we want to commend you again for all your hard work during active treatment; it really made our job a lot easier. Thanks! It is important now for you to have a dental checkup and cleaning-be sure and show off your beautiful smile!!

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Patient's Signature

Date

Parent's Signature

Date