

## Retainers

Congratulations! Your “active” phase of orthodontic treatment has been completed. There is still one more important phase to ensure that your teeth remain in their new position. This is the “retention phase”. This important final phase maintains the improvement that has been made and helps protect your investment in your new smile.

In order to maintain the new position of your teeth your retainer must be worn as prescribed, except when eating, brushing or playing sports.

For the first few days you may notice extra saliva in your mouth and your speech may be slightly affected. This will resolve itself as long as you wear the appliance full time as you have been instructed.

Removable retainers should be brushed with a separate toothbrush with water and/or soap (not toothpaste), before inserted and when removed from your mouth. The container must also be cleaned routinely. Without proper care your retainer will collect bacteria and debris which can compromise the integrity of the appliance and your oral health. Carefully brush and floss around your fixed retainers. Do not use boiling water or other chemicals to clean your retainers. Do not place your retainer in the dishwasher!

In order to avoid damaging your retainer keep it in your mouth at all times except meals, brushing and sports at which time the retainer will be kept in the case we provide for you. NEVER WRAP YOUR RETAINER IN A NAPKIN OR PLACE IT IN YOUR POCKET! Remove the retainer from your mouth by using the clasps on the sides of the appliance.

The fact that you have completed the active phase of treatment does not ensure permanently straight teeth. Wearing your retainers properly is critical to the stability of your new smile. Do not discontinue retainer wear on your own. Patients who do not wear their retainers as prescribed WILL experience shifting of their teeth. After full-time wear for the first year you will be able to leave it out during the day. A permanent schedule of wear is essential as retention is a life-long commitment.

Remember that your teeth need time to adapt to their new position. Do not risk less than the best long-term result.

*If you lose/break your retainer contact the office immediately as shifting (relapse) of the position of your teeth can occur. Messages can be left 24 hours, seven days a week.*