

# RETAINERS

## Important advice

### Why so important?

- A retainer is worn to hold your teeth in position while the gums and bone settle after tooth movement
- **If you do not wear your retainers your teeth will move out of line**
- Your orthodontist has asked you to wear your retainers:
  - In the first year after completing your treatment – **every night for 10-12 hours**
  - In the second year after completing your treatment – every other night for 10-12 hours
  - indefinitely – 2-3 nights a week for 10-12 hours

### Discomfort:

- It is normal for the appliance to feel tight in the first few days. If afterwards the retainer feels tight at any point it may indicate that you are not wearing it enough and your teeth are starting to move. In this case you must increase the hours of wear of your retainer to ensure your teeth remain in position
- If you have a bonded (fixed) retainer it will take your tongue a few days to get used to it
- If the appliance is giving you severe prolonged discomfort, don't wait till your next routine appointment, get in touch to arrange a sooner visit - your retainer may just need a small adjustment

### Diet:

- Your retainers should be removed for eating
- Plain water is the only permissible drink while you are wearing your retainers. Sugary drinks may cause decay. Tea and coffee may stain your teeth and your retainers
- Fizzy drinks including sugar-free varieties must be avoided as these will cause permanent damage or staining of the enamel of your teeth
- If you have a bonded retainer, avoid biting into hard, crunchy, chewy and sticky foods with your front teeth. Cut them up and use your back teeth to chew

### Cleaning:

- You should brush your teeth 3 times a day. It is very important to clean your teeth well before wearing the retainers
- You should thoroughly brush your retainer **without using toothpaste** (as this will discolour the retainer) each time you clean your teeth. This should be done over a basin of water which will stop the appliance from breaking if you drop it. Once or twice a week you should soak your retainer in a cleaning solution such as Retainer Brite and brush it well afterwards. This will keep your appliance fresh and free from bacteria
- Never use hot water to clean your retainers and keep them away from other sources of heat
- Fluoride mouthwash should be used in between brushing and before going to bed
- Disclosing tablets should be used weekly to identify problem areas where better brushing may be required
- If you have a bonded retainer you should ensure you clean well around the retainer with your toothbrush. 'Super Floss' should also be used to clean in between your teeth

### Breakages:

- Do not repeatedly click the retainer in and out with your tongue as this will break or loosen it. Never use your teeth to press the retainer into place, always use your fingers as instructed
- Try to identify the problem (broken wire, rubbing the gum, etc. ) before telephoning to allow us to offer you the appropriate advice
- Ensure your retainers are stored in a rigid container when they are not in your mouth
- A charge will be made for replacement of lost or badly broken appliances
- If you have a bonded retainer that has come loose, do not panic; simply wear your clear plastic retainer over your bonded retainer. It will keep your teeth in position until your bonded retainer is repaired

### Sports and activities:

- Remove the brace to play sports and to play a wind instrument
- A mouth guard must be worn for all contact sports

### Dental-check ups

- You need to carry on seeing your regular dentist for check-ups throughout your orthodontic treatment
- If you have a bonded retainer it is recommended that you see a hygienist every 3-6 months to remove visible tartar and keep your teeth and gums healthy
- If you have a further dental treatment that alters the teeth in any way, you will require a new removable retainer that fits perfectly

1. I am satisfied with the final position of my teeth and I am happy to have my braces removed today.
2. I will follow the instructions regarding the retainers and agree to follow the advice provided by my orthodontist
3. I understand that retention is a lifelong commitment and that my teeth will move unless I follow this advice carefully

Name (print):

Signed:

Date: