

# Congratulations, you've made it to the retainer stage of your treatment!

Now that we have your teeth where we want them, we need to make sure that they stay there and the retainers will do just that. Here are some things that you'll need to know for removable retainers. There are slightly different rules for permanent bonded retainers that are given in a separate letter.

- Only you can keep the teeth straight once the braces have been removed. There is no end-point to your retention period. Teeth are like any other part of the human body in which they will try and change with age. Retainers should be worn every night and while at home to reduce chance of losing them.
- **Always** put retainers in their case when they are not in your mouth. Take your retainers out when eating and **never** wrap them in a napkin. Also, dogs love to chew them, even if in the case, so keep them in a very safe place at all times.
- Clean retainers thoroughly, once a day, with a toothbrush and toothpaste. Use warm water but not hot as this will cause distortion and the retainers will not fit. Brushing retainers removes the plaque and eliminates odors. Effedent or other orthodontic appliance cleaners can be used but these do not take the place of brushing.
- It is very important to attend the recommended follow up appointments for the retainers. Normally, this is 4 weeks after initial delivery, then 8 weeks, then 12 weeks, after that every 6–12 months. This is to ensure that the retainers are fitting properly and the teeth are not moving. **ALWAYS BRING YOUR RETAINERS TO EVERY APPOINTMENT.**
- If you have any questions or concerns about your retainers or your retainers need adjusting or don't fit well, call us immediately. Do not try to adjust them yourself.
- Retainers are breakable, so treat them with care. If retainers are lost or broken call us immediately. Lab fees will be charged for lost retainers.
- While retention is life long, we will be actively supervising the process for the next 4-5 years, which is included in the original fee. We follow up on all patients until the wisdom teeth have been accounted for, either they have erupted fine or have been removed by the oral surgeon. Wisdom teeth can create many problems including difficulty in cleaning, cavities, gum infections, damage to adjacent teeth or infections. The recommended age for removal is 16–18 depending on development. Our office will take the needed radiographs and provide a referral to a trusted oral surgeon.
- The final retention phase is what we call "On Demand Recall", meaning if there are any problems or questions with the retainers or if they need adjustments you can call to set up an appointment to be seen. We use the highest quality orthodontic laboratory to make the final retainers along with your good proper care to ensure they last a very long time. Retainers are like glasses or any other personal item – they can wear out over time. If they do wear out, we advise replacing them to protect your investment. Lab fees will be charged for replacement retainers.
- The type of retainers used depends on the problem at the start of treatment, how cooperation was during active treatment, and which will best hold teeth stable, long term. Your teeth will only stay straight for as long as you wear retainers, if you choose to discontinue use you must assume responsibility for any movement.

Chosen types of retainers are: Upper \_\_\_\_\_ Lower \_\_\_\_\_

- A) Hawley or Spring Aligner (Removable)
- B) Bonded Retainer (Permanent) with Essex Overlay (Removable)
- C) Bonded Retainer (Permanent ) with Positioner (Removable)
- D) Positioner (Removable)

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Patient Name (print first, then sign)

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Parent/Guardian Signature