

YOUR RETAINERS

Congratulations on the successful completion of the active part of your orthodontic treatment. I know that you are proud of the way your teeth look and feel. You should be, because your help and cooperation have played a very important role in the progress of your treatment.

After the braces have been removed, you will be in a very important phase of treatment called “retention”. The retainers serve to hold your teeth in the new positions they have been moved to. During this time, the teeth will settle into a stable and functional bite and your bones and muscles will adapt to the new dental arrangement. It is **CRITICAL** to wear your retainers as directed to avoid “relapse”. Relapse is the tendency for the teeth to migrate back to where they started from. Please do not gamble with the investment you’ve made in your teeth by neglecting your retainers. ***Your treatment fee includes the first set of retainers and one year of retainer check visits.***

Please remember these “Facts of Life”:

1. If you do not wear your retainers, your teeth will move!
2. Dogs love to eat retainers!
3. A retainer wrapped in a napkin and left on a lunch tray will be thrown away!
4. ****Retainers should only be in two places – your mouth or the case.** If they are somewhere else, they will undoubtedly get bent, broken, stepped on, smashed, or lost!

Considering the most current research available on retainers and stability, I recommend the following schedule for wearing your retainers:

Full time wear =	<u>First 8 weeks</u>
Night time wear =	<u>Remainder of the first year</u>
Long term wear =	<u>At least a couple of nights per week thereafter</u>
Lower permanent retainer =	<u>As long as you want the teeth to remain straight!!</u>

If the retainers make the teeth sore or feel “tight” when you wear them, it is a sign that you need to wear the retainers more.

Our teeth move throughout our entire lifetime, whether we’ve had braces or not. The movement may be so minor that we don’t even notice it, or it may be significant. The only way to guard against long term shifting of the teeth is long term retainer wear.

Retainer Care:

To care for your retainer, rinse it in cold water, brush it with toothpaste every time you brush your teeth, and store it in your retainer case when it is not in your mouth. The #1 cause of lost retainers is taking them out to eat and accidentally throwing them away because they are wrapped in a napkin or left on the tray when eating out. ***Please keep your case with you and put the retainer in the case when eating.*** This greatly reduces the risk of losing it or throwing it away accidentally.

If either retainer is lost or broken, please contact us as soon as possible so that a replacement can be made. Understand that your first set of retainers is included with the treatment fee, but there will be an **additional charge for replacement of lost or broken retainers.** Currently, that charge is **\$100 per retainer.**