

Retainer Instructions

1. Patients are to wear their retainers on a full time basis for 6-9 months following braces removal. **This means twenty- four hours a day.** This is very critical following the removal of the braces. **It is during the first several months that the teeth may shift quickly if not properly held in position.** This is because of the softened state of the bone and the pull of the gums initially after the braces are removed. Sometimes the teeth may even feel loose. This is normal. They will tighten after the bone hardens.

Two exceptions to wearing retainers on a full time basis:
 - a. During meals (optional)
 - b. While brushing teeth
2. **If retainers are not worn as instructed, teeth will move out of proper position.**
3. If a retainer is causing any unusual discomfort, it should be removed from your mouth and placed in water. Call the office for an adjustment visit.
4. If the retainer is not worn for 48 hours or more the following may result:
 - a. The acrylic in the retainer will dry out and distort
 - b. Significant shifting of the teeth may occur.
5. **When eating, always place the retainer in the box given to you at retainer insertion.** Place in a front pocket or pocket book. Retainers are often thrown away when they are wrapped in a napkin instead of placed in the retainer box. Please be very careful and always place the retainer in the box if not in your mouth or not being cleaned.
6. Cleaning of the retainer is very important:
 - a. Always brush the parts of the retainer (the metal wire head, acrylic plate) ever day with a toothbrush.
 - b. Retainer Brite is an effective cleaner. Use Retainer Brite during dinner- time.
 - c. The use of mouthwash can improve the taste of the retainer. Place in a cup of mouthwash while brushing your teeth.
7. If a retainer is not worn properly the teeth will shift! It takes 6-12 months for the bone that stabilizes the teeth to fully harden and hold their best position. After this time period, night time wear is generally recommended for an additional 12 months,. Following this, occasional wearing of a retainer is recommended for the best long- term stability of the teeth.
8. **If a retainer is broken or lost, please call the office immediately.** The first retainers are included in the cost of braces. A replacement is NOT! A charge of \$95-\$275. is the cost of replacement. That reflects our cost for the appliance. The more complex the retainer, the more costly it is to make.
9. If you have any questions, please call our office, 973-379-3803.