

Wearing and caring for your Essix Retainer

Congratulations - you have come to the end of your fixed appliance therapy! In order to give your teeth, the best chance of stability you will need to wear a retainer. The orthodontist has chosen an Essix retainer for you. It is important that you follow the instructions given to you and wear your retainer well.

Why do I need this appliance?

The essix retainer will hold your teeth in the new corrected position after your orthodontic therapy.

What are the alternatives?

We can fit you with a different kind of retainer called a Hawley which will do the same job, but which will need to be worn all the time.

What are the potential risks and side effects?

If you do not wear your retainer there is a risk that your teeth will relapse back and all your hard work of wearing a fixed brace will be undone.

What are the expected benefits of treatment?

By wearing your retainer well the new position of the teeth will be stable and there is a smaller chance of relapse.

Do I need follow up appointments with the orthodontist?

The orthodontist will want to see you every three/six months for up to a maximum of one year. After 12 months you will be discharged and advised to maintain your retainer long term with an orthodontist in practice. This will be charged with a fee.

How often will I need to wear my retainer?

- You must wear your retainer as instructed by your orthodontist e.g., full time for the first two months.
- Then you can progress to evenings and nights for a further two months and as long as the retainer is easy to get in and out after a further two months you can go to night-time wear only.
- If you find that the retainer is tight to fit, then wear it for longer periods of time as this indicates that the teeth are moving!

How do I care for my retainer?

- The Essix retainer is made from thin plastic which has been made on a model of your teeth.
- Remove when eating and store safely in your brace box as you may chew through it. Clean your teeth and retainer once finished and re-insert your retainer.
- If you have a drink whilst wearing it, take the retainer out afterwards and rinse it as drink will pool into the retainer which will hold the liquid against your teeth. This is especially important with sugary drinks as this can lead to decay.

How do I clean my retainer?

You can clean your retainer by washing it in tepid soapy water (fragrance free liquid soap will be fine) and brushing it gently with a toothbrush. Rinsing any residue once finished.

What happens if I lose or break my retainer?

You will be given a brace box to put your retainer in when you are not wearing it. Unfortunately, if you lose the retainer or you break it we will need to make you a new one. You will be charged for a replacement as we can only provide one set of retainers free.

Consent

Although you consent for this treatment, you may at any time after that withdraw such consent. Please discuss this with your medical team.

Sources of information

Consultant Orthodontist, Senior Dental Nurse at Orthodontic Department, –
Eastbourne DGH – Tel: 0300 131 4500 Ext: 771756

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net.

Hand hygiene

We are committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Dr F. Pantanali - Consultant Orthodontist.

Dr A. Ahmad - Consultant Orthodontist

The directorate group that has agreed this patient information leaflet:

Diagnosis, Anaesthetic and Surgery

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