

Removable appliances

What is a Removable appliance?

- A removable appliance is made up of an acrylic plate with wire clasps on the sides, which grip the teeth to keep the brace in place.
- It can be taken in and out by the patient.
- Removable appliances have a limited number of uses, mainly because they are restricted to moving individual teeth and widening either the upper or lower arches.
- They can also be used as space maintainers to allow permanent teeth to erupt without losing the space for them.
- It is important to understand that, it isn't a precision appliance and cannot be used for complicated or fine detailed tooth movements.

What are the alternatives?

- After taking x-rays and taking measurements of your teeth and jaws, your orthodontist may decide that the best treatment available to you at this time is with removable appliances.
- You should be sure you understand what is involved, as once started, it is important you complete the course of treatment to obtain a stable result.
- You may elect to remain as you are and not have any treatment.

What are the potential risks and side effects?

- When one of these appliances is fitted it may feel strange because the acrylic plate occupies space in your palate, which can make your speech a little difficult, but you will soon get used to it if you persevere.
- The mouth also tends to produce more saliva than usual because the brain interprets the presence of the appliance as food, this can take one or two days to settle down.
- Some people experience some irritation of the cheek, gum, or tongue. If this happens to you please telephone the department, we can give you advice or arrange for an orthodontist to adjust the appliance to make it more comfortable.

What are the expected benefits of treatment?

- Orthodontic treatment will straighten crooked or crowded teeth or move them into a better position. This can not only improve their appearance but also the way the teeth bite together, while also making them easier to clean.
- 'Prominent' upper teeth can stick out and look unpleasant; and are more likely to be damaged, but orthodontic treatment can move them back into line. In others, the way the upper and lower jaws meet can cause teeth to look unpleasant and lead to an incorrect bite. Orthodontic treatment may be able to correct both.

When will I have the appliance fitted?

- You will be given two appointments to have your appliance/s fitted. There will be a week/two weeks between them, this timing is important, so if you cannot keep either of the appointments you will need to rebook them both as they are coordinated appointments.

- The first will be to have some impressions made of your mouth, these will be used to make models of your teeth.
- Your appliance will then be specially made by a skilled technician and fitted at the second appointment, one or two weeks later.
- You will be shown how to remove and insert the appliance correctly and be given instruction on how to look after it.

Will I need to have teeth taken out?

You may not have enough room for all your permanent teeth and so it may be necessary to take out some permanent teeth to make space. Your orthodontist will tell you whether this is the case. Sometimes enough space can be created using other forms of treatment.

How long will treatment take?

- The length of treatment depends on several things, for example, how severe the problem is and how cooperative the patient is.
- Removable appliances are often used during the initial phase of more complicated treatment that may require fixed appliances (train track braces) at a later date.

Is orthodontic work permanent?

- There is a particular risk of relapse in the early months after the brace is removed so there is usually a period of retention, either using your existing appliance or a retainer brace.
- Retainers hold newly straightened teeth in position while the tissues around the roots adjust and settle. This is a very important part of the treatment.
- Even after retention, it is normal for minor tooth movements to happen throughout life, so no permanent guarantee can be given. Usual advice is to continue wearing retainers two to three times a week long term in order to prevent any adverse tooth movement.

How many visits will it take?

Most orthodontic appliances need adjusting every six to eight weeks, but your orthodontist will tell you how often you will need to attend the department to have your appliance adjusted. You will be given your next appointment after each visit.

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

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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:

Diagnostic, Anaesthetic and Surgery

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