

PATIENT INFORMATION: FIXED APPLIANCES

Now that you have a fixed brace (appliance) you may have some questions you would like answered:

Will it be painful?

It is likely to be sore for about 3-5 days each time the brace is adjusted. If necessary, simple painkillers such as the ones you would normally take for a headache should help – please read the instructions. If the brace rubs your lips or cheeks, you can use some wax to help with this. Your orthodontist can give you further advice.

Can I remove the brace?

The brace you are now wearing is fixed to the teeth for the whole of the treatment.

Can I eat normally?

Yes, you should be able to eat normally. However, for your orthodontic treatment to work well and in the shortest possible time, it is important that you take care of your teeth and brace. In order to prevent damage to both, you should:

- Avoid sugary snacks / drinks between meals and at bedtime
- Avoid sticky, chewy or hard sweets, mints and sugared chewing gum
- Avoid fizzy drinks (including diet drinks) and large amounts of fruit juice
- Hard or chewy foods – such as apples, carrots and crusty bread – can damage your brace. Avoid them or cut them up first!

What about tooth brushing?

It is important that you brush your teeth well 3 times a day. Use a fluoride toothpaste. If possible carry a brush with you for after lunch.

Brushing may take a little longer when you have a fixed brace so take your time. Pay particular attention to brush where the gums meet the teeth. Interdental brushes will help you to clean between the teeth and around the brace.

Alcohol-free fluoride mouthwash should also be used daily. Use it at a different time of the day to when you brush your teeth. This helps maintain the fluoride protection to your teeth. Avoid rinsing or eating for 20 minutes after use. Sugary snacks/drinks and poor cleaning of your teeth and brace will lead to permanent damage to your teeth.

How long will treatment take?

Usually about 12-30 months but this will vary according to how severe your tooth problem is. Missed appointments or repeated breakages of the brace will add to your overall treatment time.

Will I need to wear anything in addition to the fixed brace?

It may be necessary for you to wear elastics at some stage during your treatment. These are worn inside the mouth day and night, or sometimes just at night.

Will I need to wear another brace once my treatment has finished?

Once the active phase of treatment has finished, it will be necessary to wear a retainer. This may be removable or it may be fixed behind your front teeth. This should be worn indefinitely, please ask your orthodontist about this.

How often will I need appointments?

You will need regular appointments (usually every 6-8 weeks) during treatment for the brace to be adjusted.

Do I still need to see my regular dentist?

Yes. It will be important you still have check-ups with your regular dentist throughout orthodontic treatment so that your teeth can be checked for decay and gum disease.

What if I play contact sports?

It is recommended that you wear a gum shield. This will also be the case if you take part in activities requiring a protective helmet (e.g. horse riding). Ask your orthodontist about this.

What if I play a musical instrument?

A fixed brace may make it more difficult for you to play your wind or brass instrument. You will need to discuss this with your music teacher and orthodontist.

Remember

- Brush your teeth for 3 minutes 3 times a day
- Use an alcohol-free fluoride mouthwash once every day
- Avoid sugary snacks and drinks between meals and at bedtime
- Avoid fizzy drinks
- Avoid hard, sticky and chewy sweets or foods
- Continue to visit your dentist regularly
- Treatment will usually take 12-30 months
- You will need to wear retainers indefinitely after your treatment finishes

What do I do if my brace breaks?

This is very rarely an emergency that requires an out of hours appointment, but do not wait for your next routine appointment as the breakage may slow your treatment, or may result in damage to your teeth. Please ring the practice on 01943 465443 on the next working day.

Please scan the QR code to view the British Orthodontic Society information leaflet



