

## Why do I need to wear retainers?

All patients will be provided with retainers when the fixed appliance is removed. Retention is the phase of orthodontic treatment, which maintains the teeth in their new positions, and is for life.

### Important

Your teeth are not 'set in stone' and **will move back towards their original position if you do not wear your retainers as advised by your orthodontist.**

The NHS will not be able to provide a second course of treatment if your teeth move when you have not followed your orthodontist's retainer advice.

There are different types of retainers and you will be provided with a set designed to maintain the position of your teeth.



## Removable retainers

Whichever type of retainers you are given, they should be worn as advised by your orthodontist. They must be removed for meals tooth brushing, contact sports, swimming and drinking anything but plain water. When they are not worn they should be kept in a box, which can be obtained from main outpatient reception.

You will be given cleaning instructions when you get your retainers. Keep the retainers clean with liquid soap and a toothbrush. Toothpaste will scratch them and make them cloudy. Do not pour very hot water on them as they will shrink.



**Fixed or bonded retainers** (only some patients require these)

In some circumstances the patient will benefit from fixed or bonded retainers. They are glued on behind the front teeth to prevent gaps returning. They will often remain in place indefinitely.

You should avoid biting into hard foods that may damage them. Keep them clean by ensuring you brush them when you brush your teeth.

If your fixed retainer breaks or comes loose, please let us know immediately. Until you can be seen in the department, please wear your removable retainer (you should have one as well) over the fixed retainer. This should help maintain your tooth positions and prevent them moving until you can be seen and repairs are made to your fixed retainer.

## Once the fixed appliance is removed and retainers are fitted how often will I need to come back to the orthodontic department?

Your retainers need to be checked on a regular basis but appointments will be less frequent than during active treatment. It is important to attend your retainer review as small changes can be picked up before they become a problem. The hospital will supervise retention for a year and then you will be discharged to the care of your dentist.

## Do I still have to see my own dentist after treatment?

Yes, it is important that you continue to have regular check-ups with your own dentist throughout your orthodontic treatment and once it is completed. It is certainly worth organising a checkup once the braces come off.

## What happens if I lose my retainer or it breaks?

If your retainer is **broken** or you are **unable to wear it**, please make a repair appointment as soon as possible. There will be a charge, which is clearly displayed in department, to construct a new retainer as they are time-consuming and expensive to produce.

## Cancelling or changing appointments - 01342 414141

If you need to change an appointment, please let us know as soon as possible so that we may give your appointment to someone else. A new appointment will then be discussed and agreed with you.

We will make every effort to avoid changing your appointment, but we regret that occasionally this happens owing to unavoidable circumstances.

## Contact us

Please contact us as soon as possible if you become worried about your brace or have any other questions or concerns.

### Maxillofacial and Orthodontics Unit (Main Outpatients)

**Tel: 01342 414419 or 414304**

Monday to Friday  
8.30am – 4.30pm

If you'd like to find out how you can support QVH, please visit [www.supportqvh.org](http://www.supportqvh.org)



Please ask if you would like this leaflet in larger print or a different format.

Maxillofacial and Orthodontics Unit  
Issue 6 – Ref. No. 0125  
Approved by the Patient Information Group  
Print July 2022 – Review July 2025

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## Care of your Retainers

### Maxillofacial and Orthodontics Unit

