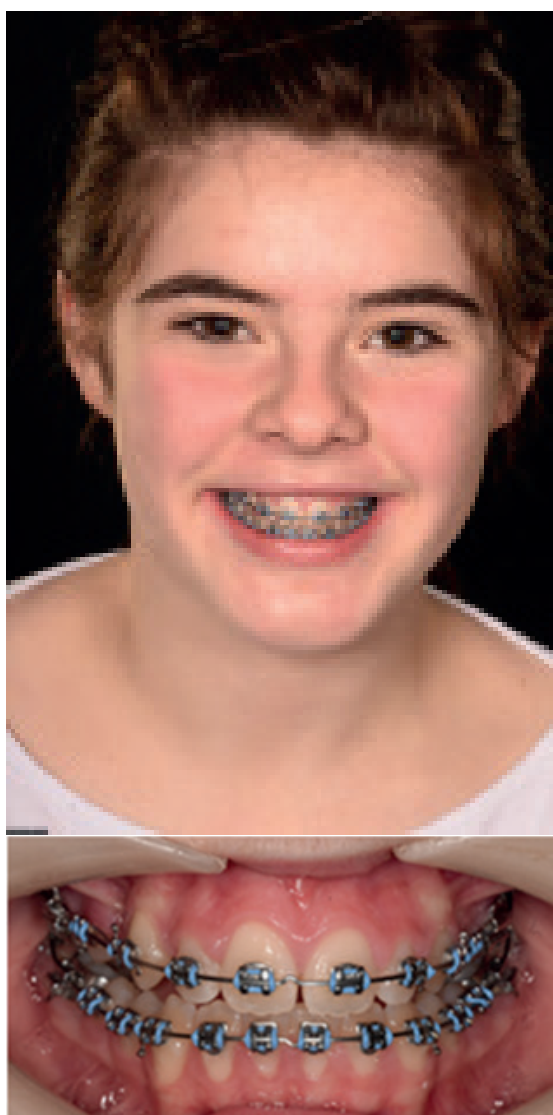


## Orthodontic treatment with fixed appliances

### Maxillofacial and Orthodontics Unit



**Your treatment will be carried out with fixed appliances (sometimes called “train track braces”) followed by retainers to keep your teeth in their new position.**

#### How often will I need to come back to the orthodontic department?

Orthodontic treatment normally takes places over a number of years and you will need to attend regularly. It is important that you avoid missing any appointments as this will delay your overall treatment. Your orthodontist will be able to tell you how often you need to come in for appointments.

#### Cleaning your brace, teeth and gums

It is essential that you keep your brace, teeth and gums perfectly clean. If not, then permanent marks and stains may develop on your teeth and there is an increased risk of tooth decay and gum disease.

You should clean your teeth after each meal and before going to bed at night. Carry a toothbrush with you to use after meals when you are away from home.

#### How do I clean my teeth?

Make sure you brush the surface of each tooth paying particular attention to the areas where the teeth and gums meet. Angle the bristles of the toothbrush so that they also clean underneath the wire and around the brackets.

The brace will not damage your teeth, but food debris and dental plaque left around the brace can cause tooth decay and gum disease. Your teeth, bands, brackets and arch wires should look clean and shiny.

Your gums should be light pink, not bright red or swollen.

When you have finished cleaning your teeth and gums, look in a mirror to make sure that no areas have been missed.

Change your toothbrush regularly; if it is well-used it may be less effective. We suggest you use a daily fluoride rinse, ideally at a separate time to brushing.

### **Can I eat and drink as normal?**

It is important to take care when eating in order to prevent any damage to your brace. All hard foods should be cut into small pieces and chewed on the back teeth.

#### **Foods and drinks to avoid**

- Fizzy drinks
- All sticky foods sweets toffees and chewing gum.
- Hard crunchy foods such as crusty bread, hard crusty edges of pizza.

### **Will I have any discomfort?**

When the brace is first fitted, there may be some discomfort. Your teeth may feel tender but this should soon ease as you get used to the brace.

If you have pain, take a painkiller, similar to what you would take for a headache.

The brace may rub on the lips, inside of the cheeks or the tongue. You will be shown how to use soft wax to make the brace more comfortable.

### **Will the brace affect my ability to play musical instruments?**

Experienced musicians who play a wind instrument may find that orthodontic treatment affects their ability to practice and perform. However, with practice and motivation, most wind instrument players can adjust to wearing braces. You can read more here: <http://www.bos.org.uk/Information-for-Schools/Advice-for-Musicians>

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

Yes, it is your responsibility to visit your own dentist for regular check-ups throughout your orthodontic treatment.

### **Risks associated with orthodontic treatment**

- Pain. After the braces are fitted your teeth can be sore for about 3-5 days. This is normal. The braces may rub your lips or cheeks; you will be given wax to help with this.
- Marks on the teeth. Your teeth will be damaged unless you keep them clean. Try to limit sweets, sugary foods and fruit/fizzy drinks and avoid sweet things between meals. Use a fluoride toothpaste at least twice a day.

- Damaged gums. If you do not brush your teeth and braces properly your gums may become red and swollen during treatment. This can cause lasting damage.
- Root damage. Braces can cause minor changes to the roots of teeth. Sometimes these changes can be more serious.
- Any teeth that have a previous history of trauma or large restorations may require root canal treatment if the nerve dies during treatment. Your general dentist would carry this out.
- Tooth movement. You will be advised to wear retainers after treatment; these are designed to keep your teeth straight. If you do not wear your retainers there is a risk that your teeth will move back to their original position.

## What should I do if I am in pain or my appliance is broken?

Please contact the orthodontic secretaries on 01342 414419, 414304 or 414142 to seek advice and make an emergency appointment.

We hold an Emergency Clinic, for patients in severe discomfort, between 8.30- 8.45am every weekday morning, except bank holidays. **You will need to contact the department to book a slot to attend this clinic.**

It is important to check each day that your brace is not broken or damaged. **If a band, bracket, arch wire, elastic, hook or spring breaks or becomes loose, or if you fracture the wire,** please contact the orthodontic secretaries on 01342 414419, 414304 or 414142 to seek advice and make an appointment .

**Repeated breakages will prolong your orthodontic treatment and will compromise your treatment result.**

## What happens when my brace comes off?

You will be given removable retainers to hold the teeth in position, sometimes these may be supplemented with a bonded retainer to hold the teeth in place. Your orthodontist will advise which retainer is best in your situation.





**Looking After Your Teeth and Brace  
Top Tips: cleaning, foods to avoid and breakages  
British Orthodontic Society**

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