



## ***RETAINERS***

### **General Information:**

Congratulations! If you are reading this page, then your treatment is almost complete. When we remove your braces, you will enter the retention phase of treatment that will last approximately 18-24 months post treatment. Retainers will be given to you on the day of your braces removal. The use of retainers after treatment is vital in maintaining your beautiful smile. Please follow all doctor and staff instructions.

### **Length of Wear:**

- Removable retainers such as Hawleys and Vacuforms should be worn full time (20-24 hours) for 6-9 months. After that period, night time only wear is recommended.
- Fixed / Permanent retainers should remain for at least 2 years or until growth has completed. Most patients end their adolescent growth spurt by the age of 21-25.

### **Maintenance and Cleaning:**

Food and bacteria can adhere to any retainers placed in the mouth just like your teeth. For removable retainers, please use a toothbrush to remove debris from the retainers. Soaking retainers in denture cleaner (Efferdent) or retainer cleaning solutions (Retainer Brite) will also help loosen debris. Never boil or microwave retainers as the plastic will melt and deform from its ideal shape. Flossing and brushing is the best method to clean fixed retainers.

### **Types of Retainers:**

There are three general types of retainers. Each type has their strengths and weaknesses. The doctor will discuss which type is best for you.

- **Hawley Retainers**

Hawley retainers are removable retainers that clasp onto the teeth. It has a hard plastic that covers the roof of the mouth and a wire in the front of the teeth the hold teeth in place. It is the recommended appliance for patients that have undergone expansion and is very durable.



- **Vacuform Retainers**

Vacuform Retainers are removable retainers that cover all teeth with a clear plastic. It is an excellent retainer in holding spaces closed and esthetic appearance. Due to the thin esthetic plastic, this retainer does deteriorate at a faster rate than other retainers and will need to be replaced every year to two years.



- **Fixed / Permanent Retainers**

Fixed retainers are these customized wires that are bonded onto the back side of the front teeth. It is less bulky than other retainers. These retainers are excellent for maintaining the position of incisors at the end of treatment. Extra care must be taken to brush and floss between teeth.



**Cost of Retainers:**

Retainers can be misplaced or broken. Replacement costs for retainers vary. Please call our office for the most up-to-date information.