

## Don't Orthodontic Relapse!

After orthodontic treatment is completed, retainers are provided for you which is the beginning of what we call "The Retention Phase". Completed orthodontic treatment does not guarantee perfectly straight teeth for the rest of your life. Teeth have a memory and often try to move back to their original positions. Retainers are required to keep your teeth in their new positions. Contact us immediately if your retainer is broken, stops fitting comfortably, or if tooth movement be suspected.

### Please follow these important instructions:

1. Unless otherwise directed, retainers are to be worn 22 hours per day for the first 6 months (except during eating, brushing), 12 hours a day during the next 6 months, and every other night the second year. Indefinite "night-time for a life-time" retainer wear is recommended 1-2 nights per week.
2. Maintain your retention appointments and follow the protocols Doctor prescribed to you.
3. If the retainers are not worn as prescribed or appointments are not kept, some undesirable changes may occur (movement of teeth) which may require re-treatment and additional charges.
4. Due to continued chewing forces to the teeth, it is common to find some tooth shiftment in later years. This is not a failure of our correction, but nature's changes that we learn to expect just as we learn to expect changes in other portions of our body as we grow older. In definitely retainer wear will minimize changes.

## General Information & Important Advice

1. Do not leave retainers in a hot car or subject them to excessive heat. Clear essix retainers are made of plastic and can be ruined by heat.
2. Keep retainers out of the reach of pets. Dogs in particular are attracted to retainers.
3. Retainers may temporarily increase in the amount of saliva in your mouth or cause some mouth dryness.
4. A retainer is a custom-made, removable appliance made specifically for you to help minimize movement.
5. Our Essix® clear retainers are BPA-free! Using a model of your teeth, we can form a custom thermoplastic retainer into the shape of your teeth. This is referred to as thermoforming, which is the process of taking a sheet of plastic material, heating it up until it's pliable, and forming it over a dental model. Once the plastic is melted enough we click on the vacuum pressure to pull down the heated plastic over the model to retain the shape of your teeth. The plastic is then cooled down, taken off your model, trimmed, polished and voilà.



## Orthodontic Retainer care Patient Brochure

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If you have any questions after reading through this brochure please don't hesitate to contact us!

## Take care of your teeth!

Plaque needs to be thoroughly removed from your teeth a couple of times a day, especially during retainer wear. Plaque is a bacterial biofilm that attaches to teeth, causing cavities, swollen gums, bad breath, and permanent stains.

Retainers make cleaning teeth a little more difficult, which can prevent people from brushing & flossing as often as needed. However, it's very important to maintain a proper oral hygiene routine to ensure that you don't allow your teeth to contract potential hygiene issues.

You should brush your teeth after every time you eat. If you don't have a toothbrush available, then at least rinse your mouth out with water. Swoosh the water around really well and spit the water out. Also, be sure to floss **at least** once every day.

Make sure to see your dentist regularly every 6 months, or more often if recommended.

### PROPER ORAL HYGIENE:

1. Brush your teeth (and floss if necessary) after eating and before inserting retainers. If it is not possible to brush, rinse your mouth with water before inserting the retainer.
2. Caries, decalcification, periodontal disease and permanent stains may occur if consistent and proper oral hygiene, such as brushing and flossing, is not performed as recommended.
3. Gums, cheeks and lips may be abraded or irritated by the aligners.
4. Eating and/or drinking sugary foods and beverages while wearing retainers may also lead to cavities, decalcification, and periodontal disease.

## Take care of your retainer!

### DAILY CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF RETAINERS:

Prior to inserting a retainer, it should be cleaned with a soft bristle toothbrush and running water.

NOTE: Retainers should be thoroughly rinsed with water after removing and before inserting.

1. It is recommended that you wash your hands with soap and water before handling retainers.
2. The retainers should be removed for eating and drinking. You may drink water with the aligners inserted.
3. Do not use denture cleaners to clean aligners. Do not soak them in mouthwash. Doing so can alter the finish of the retainers making them more visible.
4. Follow the instructions given in order to keep your retainers clean. At a minimum, clean with a soft bristle toothbrush and running water. Please do not hesitate to ask us for help.
5. A retainer case is included in your starter kit. We recommend storing your retainers in the container when they are not in your mouth. This will help protect them from damage or loss.
6. Keep aligners away from hot water and harsh chemicals.
7. Store aligners in a cool, dry place. Keep aligners out of reach of young children and pets.
8. Ensure that there is no hard debris, i.e. food or other foreign material in the aligner before inserting. Foreign material may lead to damage of the enamel.

## Retainer wear instructions

### Retainer Insertion:

Do not bite your aligners in to place. Biting them into place can damage the appliance.

Place retainers in your mouth with your fingers. They should seat well with applying finger pressure to each tooth.

### Retainer Removal:

1. Place your fingertips on the inside of last molar to slowly pull the aligner from your molars. Do this one side at a time.
2. After the aligner has been loosened from the molars, gently pry the aligner away from your teeth, working your way toward your front teeth.
3. Do not use excessive force or twist your aligner to remove it.
4. Your doctor may provide a tool or instrument to assist with aligner removal. Follow the instructions provided by your doctor.
5. After removing your aligners rinse them with water, shake them dry and store them in the case provided to help prevent loss or damage to your aligners or the instructions that may accompany the tool or instrument.