



### To maintain a beautiful smile

Wearing your retainer long-term is the best way to preserve the healthy, beautiful smile created by your orthodontic treatment. Visit your dentist regularly to monitor your dental health. Call the orthodontist immediately if a retainer become lost or broken. Applicable fee will be communicated on assessment of the damage.

### Retainers to Protect your Investment!

The retention phase of treatment is both exciting and extremely important. Up to this point it has been a team effort, but now the retention phase is up to "YOU." Retainers preserve and stabilize the results you and your orthodontist achieved through your orthodontic treatment. You are the person in charge of keeping your teeth straight and you do this by wearing your retainers regularly and as instructed.

### Long term expectations

Change is the only constant! Even though you have had orthodontic treatment, you can expect changes in tooth position. Changes in tooth position are not a failure of your orthodontic treatment but are a natural process.. It may vary from individual to individual and most of the time they are hardly noticeable. We expect changes in our bodies as we grow older, and teeth are no exception – they are just another part of the same body. To help control and limit these changes, wear the retainers as advised.

Orthodontic/braces specialists in India receive a 2 to 3 years of specialized education and training at a Dental College, recognised by the Dental Council of India, in addition to the 5 -year basic dental training, training to learn the correct way to align and straighten teeth, control and utilize facial growth, enhance smile esthetics and jaw function. Only those who successfully complete this formal education program may call themselves "Orthodontists," and only those orthodontists can be members of the Indian Orthodontic Society, the national association of qualified orthodontists in India. Selecting a member of the Indian Orthodontic Society for your orthodontic care is your assurance that the doctor is a person most qualified to do the job at hand.

If you have any questions or concerns throughout your treatment or in the future, please consult your orthodontist or visit our website.

# Retainers

to keep your Smile beautiful



## Questions and Answers

### Why does one need retainers after orthodontic treatment?

By orthodontic treatment, teeth are moved from their irregular or crooked position to desired place to achieve a beautiful smile. The newly aligned teeth are surrounded by immature remodelled bone and periodontal fibres (these fibres hold the tooth on to bone) which take much longer time to reorganise and mature to the newly acquired tooth position. Soft tissues, like tongue, lip, cheek also need time to readapt to the new dental arch form. After active orthodontic treatment is over and braces are removed, retainers are given for a sufficient period of time to hold teeth in the treated position so that the surrounding tissues get reorganised, failing which the teeth move back towards their pretreatment position. Thus it is mandatory to wear retainers to keep your smile beautiful!

### How long does one wear retainers?

Your orthodontist will recommend the most optimal duration of retainer wear for you as the retainer protocol depends on the pretreatment position of teeth and the surrounding soft tissue. Some conditions may require minimal retainer wear while many are advised for life time use. The risk of teeth shifting from its corrected position is very high in the first month after the braces are removed. Regardless of the type of retainer you had for treatment, wearing of retainers is a must. In the first six months, you may be required to wear them approximately 22 hours per day followed by night time wear for additional 6 months. After 12 months of continuous retainer wear, it is recommended wearing your retainers 3-5 times a week for as long as you live.



## Retainers keepers of the good smile



These recommendations often shock many patients, but without consistent wear of your retainers, there is a strong possibility that the beautiful set of teeth that you now possess, will not stay beautiful forever.

### What are the different types of retainers?

Various designs of both upper and lower retainers are available.- They can be fixed or removable. The removable ones may be with wire or without (transparent). The clinical needs of the individual case at the end of active treatment, the desire of the patient and the overall compliance that the dentist can expect from the patient for retainer maintenance plays a major role in choosing the type. By default, all retainers are custom made as per your teeth structure, at the end of active treatment. Your orthodontist will decide the type that are best for you, but retainers can only do their jobs if you do yours by wearing and /or maintaining them, as instructed by your orthodontist.

### Why do some teeth shift after braces are removed?

The small changes that occur after braces are removed are due to a “settling in” as you use your teeth for biting and chewing. The more serious and undesirable changes may be traced to genetics or later natural drift that takes place as we get older, which is unpredictable. Movement is most common in lower front teeth. This is particularly true if the teeth were extremely crowded prior to treatment. Changes in tooth position are a lifelong and naturally occurring phenomenon. The best way to keep teeth from shifting

is to wear your retainers as prescribed.

### Is it possible to wear your retainer too much?

In spite of extensive research that has been undertaken to study shifting of teeth following orthodontic treatment, we still have limited knowledge as to what type of patients may be more prone to shifting, so the golden rule of retention – you can never wear your retainers too much or too long! Unless you wear the retainers exactly as you have been instructed, your teeth will start to move and the benefits of wearing braces will be lost.

### As a teen I had orthodontic treatment, and now as an adult my teeth are out of place. What can I do?

See your orthodontist. If possible, the one who had treated you earlier. He/she can compare with the previous records and will be in a better position to make an assessment of the reason behind the change and be more informed to decide upon the further treatment plan. If the earlier orthodontist is not available, you may visit any of the qualified post graduate orthodontic braces specialists for treatment.

### Will wisdom teeth cause teeth to shift?

In most cases, removal of wisdom teeth is done for general dental health reasons rather than for orthodontic health and research suggests that wisdom teeth do not necessarily cause teeth to shift.. Your family dentist or your orthodontist can give you guidance regarding removal of wisdom teeth.