

## Instructions for wearing your retainers

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio tape or computer disk, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please telephone the PALS desk on 01271 314090.

Congratulations! You have now completed your orthodontic treatment with braces to straighten your teeth and correct your bite. Today you will have been fitted with removable retainers.

This leaflet has been prepared to give you advice and information about what is expected from you whilst wearing orthodontic retainers.

**It is important to wear your retainers as instructed by the orthodontist. Failure to do this may cause your teeth to move.**

Please follow the instructions below:

1. When you are not wearing your retainers, please store them securely in the box that has been supplied.
2. Please clean your retainers with a toothbrush and lukewarm water. Do not use toothpaste. Use liquid soap to clean the retainers if they become unpleasant. Retainer cleaners can also be found in most good chemists.
3. Please keep your retainers away from pets/animals. They will destroy them.
4. Avoid keeping retainers in tissue as they can be easily thrown away.

On occasions a retainer may snap/break or develop holes due to clenching habits. Whilst you are still seeing the orthodontist to review your retainers, these can be replaced free of charge.

All retainers that are lost or destroyed (e.g. thrown away, chewed by an animal, put through the washing machine etc.) can be replaced. **There is a charge for replacement retainers in these situations.**

### Who to contact in case of problems with your retainer?

Should you require assistance about your retainers in between your regular appointments, please phone the department on **01271 322477**. Replacement retainers can sometimes be made from your old models. Alternatively you may need to attend the department so new impressions (moulds of your teeth) can be taken.

Out of hours or when the office is unmanned, please leave a message on the answer phone. Please let us know the name of the patient, date of birth or hospital number and a telephone number to return your call.

Please note the department is closed on weekends and public holidays.

## What happens after discharge

Once you have been discharged from clinic, you will be advised to continue to wear your retainers on a part time basis. Teeth move throughout life and it is a normal ageing process. **The only way to have permanently straight teeth is to wear your retainers part time throughout life.**

Retainers can still be replaced at this stage. However, as you have now completed your treatment and supervision of retention, further retainers are replaced on a self-funding basis. As a general rule replacement retainers will need to be supplied by your registered dentist.

## Further information

If you have any further questions about wear of your retainers, please discuss with your orthodontist by contacting the department on **01271 322477**.

### PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, call 01271 314090 or e-mail [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of the staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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