

## Fixed appliances

Now that you have a fixed brace you may have some questions you would like answered.

Will it be painful?

It is likely to be sore for about 3-5 days each time the brace is adjusted. If necessary, painkillers such as the ones you would normally take for a headache may help (please read the instructions on the packet). If the brace rubs your lips or cheeks, you will be given some wax to help with this.

Can I remove the brace?

The brace you are now wearing is fixed to the teeth for the whole of your treatment. You should not try to remove it, as you may damage your teeth and the treatment will not work.

Can I eat normally?

Yes you should be able to eat normally. For your orthodontic treatment to work well and in the shortest possible time it is important you take care of your teeth and brace. In order to prevent damage to both, you should avoid the following:

- Toffees, boiled sweets, sugared chewing gum, chocolate bars, etc.
- Fizzy drinks including diet drinks, excessive amounts of fruit juice.
- Hard foods which might damage the brace such as crunchy apples, crusty bread rolls, etc.

Hard foods can be eaten with care if you cut them up first.



What about toothbrushing?

It is important you brush your teeth well, three times per day and use a fluoride toothpaste. If possible carry a brush with you for use after lunch. Pay particular attention to brush where the gums meet the teeth. Brushing may take a little longer when you have a fixed brace.

A daily fluoride mouthrinse should also be used last thing at night, after toothbrushing, to further protect the teeth. Failure to keep your teeth and brace clean will lead to permanent scarring of your teeth as shown in the picture above.

How long will treatment take?

It usually takes 12 - 24 months but will vary according to how severe your case is. Failed and cancelled appointments or repeated breakages of the brace will add to the overall treatment time.

Will I need to wear anything in addition to the fixed brace?

It may be necessary for you at some stage during the treatment, to wear headgear and/or elastics. Headgear is usually worn in the evenings and at night. Elastics are worn inside the mouth all the time, including mealtimes.



Fixed Brace with elastics

Will I need to wear another brace once my treatment has finished?

Once the active phase of your treatment has been finished, it will be necessary to wear a retaining brace. This may be removable or it may be fixed behind your front teeth. The length of time this has to be worn can vary.



Before Active Treatment    After Active Treatments

How often will I need an appointment?

You will need regular appointments during treatment for the brace to be adjusted.

Do I still need to see my regular dentist?

Yes. It will be important you still have check-ups with your regular dentist throughout orthodontic treatment so that your teeth can be checked for decay.

What do I do if I play contact sports?

It is recommended you wear a gumshield. This will also be the case if you enjoy riding a bicycle, roller-skating, or skateboarding. You will be advised about this.

What if I play a musical instrument?

If you play a wind instrument, particularly the flute or a brass instrument, then a fixed brace may make it more difficult. You will need to discuss this with your music teacher.

What do I do if my brace breaks?

Ring up for an appointment as soon as is reasonably possible. Do not wait for your next routine appointment as the breakage may slow your treatment, or may result in damage to your teeth. If you repeatedly break your brace treatment may be stopped.

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