CARE OF YOUR ORTHODONTICS RETAINERS

Your retainer was custom made especially for you. Like a precision instrument, it will require some special care. We have made it as strong as we could for the job it has to do and yet kept it as comfortable as possible. Together we have worked hard to straighten your teeth and fix your bite. Your retainer will hold your teeth in their final position (if you wear it); otherwise they may slip back toward their old positions. Follow Dr. Drake’s specific instructions about wearing, eating, and sleeping in your retainer. Your cooperation is essential!

* **WEARING YOUR RETAINER**: You will wear the UPPER retainer full time for the first month, after that you are to wear your retainer every night. The LOWER retainer is to be worn primarily at night time, doubling as a night guard.
* **PLACING AND REMOVING YOUR RETAINER**: Follow the instructions you were given. Never pull or bend the retainer. Bring it to each appointment.
* **BREAKAGE/LOST**: Never leave your retainer out of your mouth except in its case. Do not leave it lying around or wrapped in tissue. It could get lost, thrown away, or damaged. If you have dogs or cats, keep the retainer out of their reach; for some reason they love to chew on retainers! Never leave your retainer in a hot car or other hot place where it will warp. ***If lost or broken, it is imperative that you have an immediate replacement. Otherwise your teeth will shift! There will be an additional charge for any broken or lost retainers.***
* **SPEAKING WITH YOUR RETAINER**: At first talking may seem difficult. However, with a little practice, you will quickly overcome this. Initially, there will be extra saliva in your mouth, but this will go away after a day or so.
* **EATING WITH YOUR RETAINER**: If you have been instructed to eat with your retainer, it is a good idea to eat softer foods for the first few days. Avoid very chewy, sticky, or hard foods.
* **CLEANING YOUR RETAINERS**: if you are wearing your retainer full time, brush the retainer each time you brush your teeth (after every meal and before sleeping). You can use toothpaste and your toothbrush to carefully scrub the plastic while holding it in the palm of your hand. Rinse the retainer off in warm water. Never use hot water or hot liquids as this could warp the retainer and it will not fit correctly. If your retainer becomes especially dirty, (which should not happen if you clean it regularly), you may soak it in a glass of water containing Efferdent or Polident (denture cleaner) tablet. You may also use distilled vinegar. Do not use caustic chemicals to clean the retainer as they may corrode the metal or damage the plastic.

**If your bonded lower retainer breaks, please call us immediately and wear your clear lower retainer until you are able to be seen.**