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Instructions for the Care and Use of Your Retainers

You play an important role in the creation of your new smile. Patient cooperation can affect the length of treatment and the quality of the final outcome, so please follow our instructions carefully and contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Dental hygiene is particularly critical while you are wearing braces—brush your teeth several times a day and see your dentist every six months for a check-up and professional cleaning. Avoid sticky, hard, and chewy foods.

If you have an after-hours emergency, call our office at 978-369-3690 and follow the instructions on our recorded message.

Retainers, fixed and/or removable, help keep your teeth in place after orthodontic treatment.

Removable Retainers

- Put on and take off the retainers carefully, the way we showed you.
- When you first start wearing your retainers, it is normal for them to feel tight, and your teeth may feel slightly sore. As you continue wearing the retainers, they will become less tight.
- Sometimes it takes a few days to become adjusted to speaking and swallowing while wearing the retainers.
- You may remove the retainers for eating, sports, and cleaning your teeth. Any time you remove the retainers, they **must** be placed in their case. This will prevent them from being lost, damaged, or accidentally thrown away. Pets love to chew on them!
- The retainers should be cleaned daily by brushing with tooth brush and toothpaste. Do not use the dishwasher or soak in mouthwash for an extended time. Denture cleaners may also be used periodically.
- Please bring your retainers to each appointment so we may check them and make any necessary adjustments.
- The retainers must be worn for the prescribed amount of time to be effective. Your teeth can move in just a day or two if you forget to wear the retainers.
- Please wear your retainers:
 - 8 – 10 hours per day/just while sleeping
 - 16 – 18 hours per day
 - 20 – 22 hours per day

Fixed Retainers

Fixed retainers are high-grade stainless steel wires shaped to the contour of the teeth. They are glued onto the tongue side of the upper and/or lower front teeth to prevent relapse.

- Flossing your teeth daily is an important part of caring for your fixed retainer. Use a floss specially designed for braces and bridges, and floss the way our staff has shown you.