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INSTRUCTIONS FOR RETENTION

Congratulations on the removal of your braces! We hope that you are as pleased as we are with your results. Now that the appliances have been removed and we have begun the retention phase of treatment, we recommend a thorough examination and cleaning by your family dentist. This is very important to preserve the health and function of the teeth.

Retention appointments will be scheduled from one to several months apart, depending on your specific needs. Retainers will be adjusted and setting of the teeth monitored. Retaining appliances hold the teeth while the bone becomes solid around the roots and the teeth adjust to their corrected positions. Therefore, failure to wear retainers as instructed, even briefly, can cause rapid relapse of the teeth toward their original positions. While slight changes in alignment and bite are to be expected as the teeth settle, excessive changes due to poor retainer wear will require braces again to realign the teeth. Third molars (wisdom teeth) will be evaluated during the retention period until it can be determined if they should be removed.

Retainer wear is a lifelong endeavor. After ten months of retention following appliance removal, you will be given final instructions, including recommendations on the long term wear of your retainers. After the retention phase of treatment, appointments will incur an office visit charge.

Recommendations: Please follow these recommendations for a successful retention phase of treatment.

- (1) Wear removable retainers 5-6 hours per day and while sleeping, unless instructed otherwise.
- (2) Brush retainers once a day, holding the retainer in the palm of your hand, and supporting it you're your thumb. Be careful to brush all surfaces.
- (3) Push the retainer into position with your fingers. Biting the retainer into position will eventually break it.
- (4) Be gentle when removing retainers. Removing the clear retainer by loosening one side at a time will weaken and eventually crack the retainer. Remove both sides of the retainer at the same time.
- (5) Avoid playing with and flipping the retainer with your tongue. This will eventually break the retainer.
- (6) Expect excessive salivation and a plastic taste when the retainer is new, which will subside after a day or two.
- (7) Keep the retainer in the case when not in your mouth.
- (8) Keep the retainer and case away from cats and dogs who will chew them.
- (9) Be careful that the retainer and case are never exposed to excessive heat.
- (10) Soak retainers in clear mouthwash or denture cleanser to freshen them, if desired.
- (11) Do not expose clear retainers to any colored liquid.
- (12) Floss permanent retainers (fixed wire on the tongue side of the teeth) daily.
- (13) Take care of your retainers to avoid the additional expense of replacing them.

If any difficulties develop with your teeth or retainers, please call our office immediately. It has been our pleasure to serve you.