

## Care of Your Retainers

All of the hard work that we have done together has paid off. You now have a great smile that can last a lifetime.

You are now entering the critical phase called retention. Retention is essential to the long-term maintenance of your new smile.

**Why do I need a retainer?** Your teeth have been moved to correct certain problems. It takes time for them to become stable in their new positions. Supporting tissue and bone need time to develop around your teeth to maintain these positions. The retainer is specifically designed to hold your teeth in this ideal place while your body generates this support.

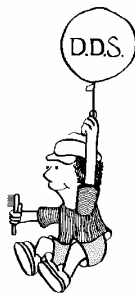
Without retainers, your teeth would naturally have a tendency to try to return to their original positions.

**How your retainer works...** Retainers, as already stated, hold your teeth exactly where they are supposed to be. Your retainer is to be **worn full time** unless otherwise instructed by us. If you neglect to wear your retainer for awhile, you may notice that it fits more tightly or is uncomfortable to place. This is an indicator that your teeth are shifting, and you need to get back on schedule with your wear immediately.

**Your speech** will be affected initially. This usually disappears quickly. Try reading aloud to yourself to speed up the process.

**Care of your retainer...** Retainers must be kept clean! After every meal, the retainer should be thoroughly rinsed, and lightly brushed with toothpaste. Additionally, your retainer can be soaked in "Efferdent Tablets" at dinner time, or all day once you are given the okay to wear it at night only. Keeping your retainer clean will avoid unpleasant odors and buildup.

**Always store** your retainer in its case to protect it from damage when it is not being worn. Never place the retainer in your pocket or on a lunch tray. Keep it away from dogs. Retainers are very fragile and can be easily damaged or broken. Should damage occur, call us immediately so it may be fixed or replaced.



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