



**ORTHODONTICS**  
*Exclusively*

**CONGRATS!**  
*You did it*

**The wear and care of your  
Hawley retainers now that  
you've completed treatment**

Fort Myers  
239-936-2175

Cape Coral  
239-574-7101

Lehigh Acres  
239-368-5870





# WHEN TO WEAR

- Wear your retainers as instructed by your orthodontist
- For most people this means 24/7 (all day, all night except for eating and brushing your teeth) for the first 4 months.
- After the first 4 months, wear on a regular nightly basis thereafter. Regular retainer wear is for a lifetime!
- Some young patients with primary (baby) teeth who have had an early set of braces may be asked to wear them after school and all night.
- It is normal to have a lisp and to salivate the first week while getting used to wearing your retainers. It will go away the first week if you wear them as instructed.



- Place your retainers in your case when you are eating or brushing your teeth. Anytime they are not in your mouth, your retainers should be in your case and someplace safe. This is especially true for retainers with fake teeth, as they will break off if worn while eating.
- Take your retainers out for certain activities like sports, choir, or band. Put them back in once you are done.
- Put your name and contact information on your case.





# DON'T

- Wear your retainer sporadically or take too big of a break without wearing them. Maintaining a regular routine will help keep them comfortable and fitting well



- **DO NOT** wait to call us if your retainer gets lost, breaks, or doesn't feel/fit right

**\$\$\$ Treat your retainers like money or your smartphone \$\$\$**



- Wrap your retainers in napkins or tissues, even around the house
- Put them in your pocket without the case
- Put your retainers on a lunch tray or restaurant table
- Set them down where your dog can reach them. They will become your furry friend's most expensive chew toy!

**Kids, remember your parents did something very special for you that took a lot of time and money. Pay them back by wearing your retainers well and taking good care of them. Nobody wants to work a summer job or pay for Round 2 of orthodontic treatment when you're an adult!**



# CLEANING YOUR RETAINERS

- Brush all surfaces of your retainers with your toothbrush and toothpaste or mild handsoap when brushing your teeth
- Rinse and dry your retainers before placing them in your case. This will help reduce odors



- You may soak them in a retainer solution or denture solution to keep them fresh and reduce buildup

## DO NOT

- Soak your retainers in any harsh chemicals like mouthwash, alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, bleach or ammonia. These will discolor and degrade the metal and plastic
- Place your retainers in/near anything hot, like in boiling water, a dishwasher, washing machine, curling/flat iron or a hot car on a hot Florida Summer day. This will warp or melt the plastic





# HOW TO WEAR

- Wash your hands or hand-sanitize
- Pull gently and evenly on both loops of the front wire or pull from the tongue-side plastic to remove

## **DO NOT**

- Pull just from one side or yank hard on the wire. This can lead to bending or breaking of the wire and unwanted tooth movement



- Use your fingers to firmly seat your retainers in place. The plastic should touch the tongue side surfaces of the teeth, but may not fully touch the palate. You will feel the clasps over the chewing surfaces of your teeth when they touch

## **DO NOT**

- Chomp down or bite your retainers into place. This will break them
- Click them in and out with your tongue. This will loosen them up and/or break them





# FAQ



## ***Doc, How long do I have to wear my retainers?***

Remember, shift happens! As you continue to age and use your teeth, your teeth will wear and have the tendency to shift. Continue wearing your retainers regularly to minimize movement. Even a few nights a week as you get older goes a long way to prevent major relapse. Even with excellent retainer wear, over the decades your teeth will move. Small shifts in your teeth don't always mean you need orthodontic retreatment. If your retainers ever start feeling really tight, that is your cue you may need to increase your retainer wear. Even if you're old and gray, keep up your regular retainer wear if you still care about keeping your teeth straight.

## ***Is there anything else I can do to help keep my teeth straight?***

Continue good home oral hygiene and seeing your general dentist and/or periodontist regularly throughout your lifetime. Maintaining healthy teeth, gums, and bone support and avoiding periodontal disease and gum inflammation helps provide a strong foundation for keeping your teeth straight. This is especially true for those orthodontic patients who have naturally short roots or have had some root resorption/root shortening during your orthodontic treatment or have had previous periodontal (gum and bone) loss.



# FAQ



**Doc, I have still have wisdom teeth, are my teeth going to shift? Doc, my wisdom teeth are getting extracted, is it going to mess all my hard work up and make my teeth crooked again? Doc, I wasn't even born with wisdom teeth, why are my teeth still moving?**

This is one of the biggest debated hot topics in orthodontics for the past 100 years! While it's convenient to blame wisdom teeth for shifting teeth over time, orthodontic research studies over decades have shown little scientific evidence of wisdom teeth causing teeth to shift (especially the lower front teeth). We recommend good, regular retainer wear over the years (even if you still have your wisdom teeth or no wisdom teeth). Don't give yourself too long a break without popping your retainers in after wisdom tooth removal, and continue to have any wisdom teeth present monitored by your general dentist over time.

**What should I do if I lose my retainer, if they break, or took a break and have a hard time putting them in or have shifting?**

Call us during office hours right away. We will make an appointment and get you in to see the doctor. Bring your retainer with you if you still have it so the doctor can see what and where the issue is. If you need a set of new retainers, we will discuss the type and fee with you. Some retainers, especially ones with fake teeth on them may be more expensive to replace. If relapse/shifting has occurred, we will let you know if some clear aligners or retreatment with braces will be needed to get you straightened back out!

**Please call us right away if you have any problems as small things are usually much easier and cost-effective to fix.**





**ATTENTION  
PLEASE**



Some sports or activities may require you to remove your retainers or wear a mouthguard instead (basketball, football, soccer, Mui Thai, boxing, wrestling, swimming, running, singing in choir, playing an instrument in band, etc.) Please protect your beautiful teeth and smile and wear your mouthguard! Elbows, heads, and knees to your teeth can cause a lot of expensive damage. Make sure you put your retainer in your case and someplace safe (bookbag, locker, gym bag, instrument case, etc.) during these activities and put them right back in when you're done if you are still on full-time wear.



What should I do if I get dental work and my retainer doesn't fit, have a tooth extracted, or an implant placed? Communicate any major restorative dental work to your orthodontist so you can work on a plan for retention during and after your dental work which may include new retainers. If you have had dental work done and it affects the fit of your retainer, call the office right away so we can get you in to see the doctor to check and adjust the retainer as needed or take an impression for a new retainer. If a tooth has been extracted, sometimes we can modify your retainer to hold the space so the teeth around the extraction site don't shift.



# RETAINER HIDE AND SEEK: TRUE TALES OF RETAINER DISAPPEARANCES FROM OUR ACTUAL PATIENTS!

**Find that  
retainer in each  
scenario!**



**DROPPED AND  
RAN OVER BY  
THE CAR**



**LEFT ON THE  
LUNCH TRAY**



**FELL INTO THE  
WATER WHILE  
FISHING**



**WASHED AWAY  
AT THE BEACH**



**HOUSEKEEPING THREW  
IT OUT AT THE HOTEL,  
ON MY CRUISE...**



**I HAVE NO IDEA,  
I LOOKED FOR IT  
EVERYWHERE!**



**MY CAT ATE IT  
OR BATTED IT  
AROUND**





**DUMPSTER DIVING**



**WRAPPED IN A NAPKIN THAT MOM THREW OUT WHILE CLEANING UP AFTER ME**



**FELL OUT WHILE SCREAMING AND RUNNING AWAY AT A HAUNTED HOUSE**



**DROPPED A BARBELL ON IT WHEN WORKING OUT**



**LEFT IT ON THE RESTAURANT TABLE**

**OR**

**CRUSHED IT IN MY POCKET WITHOUT THE CASE**



**MY DOG ATE IT**



**NOT IN MY CASE AND CRUSHED IN MY BOOKBAG**



**FLEW OUT OF MY MOUTH WHILE SCREAMING ON A ROLLERCOASTER**



**LEFT IT LAYING AROUND AND MOM VACUUMED IT UP**



**FELL OUT OF A POCKET AT WORK AND CRUSHED BY A BULLDOZER**