

# Post-Orthodontic Treatment Guide to your Retainers

## Wearing your retainer:

1<sup>st</sup> month= wear your retainers ALL THE TIME except when eating or brushing your teeth

2<sup>nd</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> month= “in the house, in the mouth” Wear your retainers whenever you are home

6 months + = night time wear only

## But its been years since I had my braces and my teeth haven't moved, why do I need to wear my retainers?

Teeth can crowd over time. The shift may not be fast, thus it may not be noticeable until the teeth have moved just enough that your retainer doesn't fit. If this happens and your retainer doesn't fit back in, how do you move them back? With braces.

## How to clean and store your removable retainers

Remove your retainers and brush them gently with a soft toothbrush. This is best done when you are brushing your teeth, which should be done at LEAST twice a day, in the morning (after breakfast if you eat) and at night (right after dinner). You can use a gel toothpaste to remove plaque from the retainers. Do not use an abrasive toothpaste.

NEVER sterilize your retainers with heat. DO NOT BOIL or MICROWAVE your retainers, this will warp or melt them. You can use a solution of bleach and water or a denture cleaning tablet in water for 15 minutes if you are concerned, but this is not absolutely necessary.

Store your retainers in the case provided to you. Animals LOVE to chew retainers. Please do not leave your retainers out in the open if you have them. Also, do not put your retainers on dinner plates or in napkins. They stand a good chance of being forgotten or thrown away.

## If you also have a fixed/cemented metal retainer:

These are NOT “permanent” retainers as they are often called. They CAN last for many years, however they may come off based on eating habits and food choices. To best maintain your fixed retainers, avoid biting items or food with your front teeth. We recommend that food items like apples and corn on the cob be cut into smaller bites.

These retainers need to be cleaned twice a day, just like your teeth. Items to use to help clean your fixed retainer:

1. Floss threaders with traditional floss
2. Super floss
3. Interdental pick or brush
4. Water pick/air flosser

**If you LOSE or BREAK your retainers, or if you notice it doesn't fit correctly any more:**

CALL US RIGHT AWAY and get scheduled for new retainers to be made.

- a. Teeth can move very quickly, especially in the first months after orthodontic treatment is completed. New retainers will be made to keep your teeth where they are when you come back in. If your teeth have moved, that is their new permanent position unless you chose to have orthodontic treatment started again, at the current orthodontic treatment fees.
- b. If you break a retainer due to NORMAL use within the first year after debond, our practice will make you a new one for no charge
- c. Additional retainers, or retainer repairs, and re-treatment of orthodontics are all discounted for patients who have undergone orthodontic therapy at Michigan City Dental, P.C. as long as you have maintained your regular HYGEINE visits according to the schedule prescribed by the dentist (no longer than 1 month overdue)

**Please bring your retainers with you for EVERY dental appointment and let the staff know you have them at the BEGINNING of the appointment!!!!**

1. At cleaning appointments, the dentist will check their fit to ensure they are still effective.
2. If you have future dental treatment that changes the shape of your teeth, your retainers may no longer fit!
  - a. If the treating dentist knows that you have retainers, they may be able to plan your treatment in a way that your retainers still fit, and they need to be able to have the retainers to make sure they still fit.
  - b. If you try retainers in after dental work WITHOUT having the dentist check them, you can break the dental work OR your retainers. If that happens and you have done this, having either the dental work or retainers done again will be at additional costs.