

Headgear

What is the purpose of the headgear?

Headgear is worn to move your back teeth, or to stop them from moving forwards whilst the front teeth are being straightened. If you do not wear the headgear as your orthodontist asks you, then your front teeth may be left sticking out at the end of treatment!

Are there any special instructions I need to know?

Yes. You will be shown how to put the headgear on and off whilst at the surgery. The important points to remember are:

- Remove the headgear **before** the metal inner bow. Never remove or fit the headgear in one piece by pulling the headgear over the face or head.
- At night always ensure that the safety mechanisms are in place to prevent accidental removal of the headgear and face bow.
- If any part of the appliance becomes detached during sleep, stop wearing the headgear and contact your orthodontist.
- Bring your headgear to each appointment and let your orthodontist know if you are having any problems with it.
- Do not wear headgear while playing sports or rough games
- Very rarely, eye injuries have occurred whilst wearing headgear. If this should happen, it must be treated as a medical emergency. Attend your local Accident and Emergency Department for an ophthalmic opinion as soon as possible.

Will it be painful?

Your teeth may ache for about 3-5 days after the headgear is fitted. If necessary, mild painkillers such as the ones you would normally take for a headache may help (please read the instructions on the packet regarding dosage and check with your parents). Do not stop wearing the headgear because of toothache; otherwise you will have to go through the discomfort of starting wearing it all over again.

How long do I have to wear the headgear?

It is important that you wear the headgear for the number of hours that your orthodontist has asked you to wear it for. If you do not, it will not be possible to complete your treatment successfully.

Can I eat with the headgear on?

No, it will not be possible for you to eat and drink with the headgear in place.

What about tooth brushing?

It is important you brush your teeth well, three times per day and use fluoride toothpaste. You should remove the headgear to brush your teeth.

What do I do if I have problems wearing the headgear?

If you have any problems with the headgear e.g. the headgear comes off during the night or any part will not stay in place then **STOP WEARING IT IMMEDIATELY.**

Ring up for an appointment as soon as is reasonably possible. Do not wait for your next scheduled appointment and make sure you bring all the parts of the headgear with you.