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## TOOTH POSITIONER APPLIANCE

As part of your final phase of orthodontic treatment, you or your child has been given a tooth positioner. This appliance is made specifically for you from models obtained from recent impressions. The wear of the positioner appliance is intended to be of relatively short duration (three to seven weeks), but provides major benefits in the positioning of the teeth.

Although you may feel that your teeth are straight at the time the braces are removed, proper wearing of your positioner will provide an even better finished result. Your positioner can accomplish minor tooth movements more effectively, rather than taking months longer with the braces. The positioner will maintain your teeth in these new positions and will help to close the small spaces remaining between your back teeth after the bands are removed.

Common Questions	Item was discussed	Directions
When do I wear the positioner?		We ask you to wear your positioner as directed until your next appointment. We would like you to wear your positioner on a <b><u>full time basis for the next 24 hours (excluding meals)</u></b> . <b>For the following weeks, wear it <u>as much as possible, with minimum time being four to six hours during the daytime PLUS during sleeping hours</u></b> , until you receive your retainers (usually within 3 to 7 weeks). The daytime wear can be split into 20-minute segments, totaling at least four hours. The daytime wear is the most crucial part of positioner wear. Initially after sleeping, you may find the positioner is not in your mouth when you awake. This is normal. Just put it in each night and you will usually find you can keep it in your mouth the whole night within a week or so.
How long will I need to wear the positioner?		You will need to wear the positioner approximately three to seven weeks. We will check you two to four weeks after positioner delivery to take your final records and determine when you will be getting your retainers. <b>Please wear your positioner full-time for the 24 hours preceding this appointment.</b> The decision of how long you need to wear the positioner is based on how well you have been wearing the positioner and how your teeth look. Do not stop wearing your positioner until we tell you to do so. It is also wise to hold on to this appliance as a back-up retainer and/or mouthguard.
How do I wear the positioner?		The positioner is held in place by you biting into the appliance as it does not grip the teeth tightly. It is essential that you “exercise” in the following manner while wearing the positioner: Use a small, gentle, straight up and down biting motion and make sure that your teeth still are fitting into the proper sockets of the positioner. Do not use a large chewing or sideways motion as this may damage the appliance. Bite <b>gently</b> so you don’t fatigue your jaw joint. These “exercising” intervals should occur as frequently as possible, at least a 20-second interval of gentle biting in every 10-15 minute time period, (or four 20- second exercise intervals per hour). Your teeth will be sore at first. This mild discomfort means the positioner is working and your teeth are moving into their final positions.
How do I take care of the positioner?		It is important to clean your positioner thoroughly at least once a day by scrubbing it with a stiff toothbrush and toothpaste. You also may use denture cleaner. <b><u>Do not put your positioner into hot or boiling water</u></b> as that will cause distortion and possibly melt the appliance. Also, <b><u>do not leave your positioner in direct sunlight or near extreme heat</u></b> . <b>Most importantly, <u>do not leave your positioner near any household pets</u></b> . <b>Dogs, especially, are attracted to the scent of the positioner and will chew or eat it.</b> <b><u>Always put your positioner in the plastic case when not wearing it.</u></b> Don’t wrap it in a napkin, as you may throw it out by accident. There is a replacement charge for any lost appliances.
What is an emergency?		An emergency is defined as: <b><u>jaw joint pain</u></b> , a <b><u>space</u></b> developing between your teeth, the appliance <b><u>pinching</u></b> your tissue or if there is any reason you cannot wear your positioner. The symptom of sore teeth is a normal occurrence (not an emergency) and can be helped with aspirin, Tylenol or Advil.
What do I do if I have an emergency?		Don’t wait until your next appointment; <b>call our office immediately</b> . We will evaluate if you need to amend your routine or come in for an additional appointment.

THIS PART OF YOUR ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT REQUIRES THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF PATIENT COOPERATION. IF YOU ARE HAVING ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE POSITIONER, PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.