INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS AND PARENTS OR CARERS

Your **removable brace**

How to wear it and look after it

PORTADOWN ORTHODONTICS

What is **a removable brace?**

A removable brace is a plastic plate with wire clasps that clip onto your teeth. Some have a small **screw** that you turn to move your teeth gently. You can take the brace out, but it only works when it is in your mouth.



Wearing **your brace**

- **Wear it 20 to 22 hours a day**, including while you sleep, unless we tell you otherwise.
- Removable or Twin Block appliances typically take **4 to 12 months**, depending on severity and how many hours a day the brace is worn.
- We recommend the **30-minute rule**: never have your brace out of your mouth for more than 30 minutes at a time.
- **Take it out only** to eat and drink, to brush your teeth and for any sport (including swimming). Then put it straight back in.
- Wear a gumshield for contact sports if we advise it.
- Do not click the brace in and out with your tongue. This can break the wires.

Your brace only works when you wear it. If it is not worn as instructed, treatment will take longer and **we may not achieve an ideal outcome**.

The first **few days**

- **It will feel big and strange.** You will soon get used to it.
- **Speech:** you may lisp at first. This usually gets better within a few days. Reading aloud helps.
- **Extra saliva:** this is common at first and soon settles.
- **Aching:** your teeth may be tender for a few days, and after each adjustment. You can take simple painkillers (always check with a parent and follow the instructions on the packet).

Eating **and drinking**

- **Take your brace out to eat and drink.** Then brush your teeth and put it straight back in.
- Avoid fizzy drinks (even diet ones), sugary drinks and fruit juice. **Water** and plain milk are best.

Keeping **it clean**

- Brush your teeth **twice a day** with fluoride toothpaste, and after meals if you can. Do not rinse afterwards.
- Each time you brush, **clean your brace with your toothbrush and toothpaste**. Then rinse it in cool water.
- **Clean it over a sink filled with water**, so it is less likely to break if you drop it.
- **Never use hot water** – it can bend the plastic so the brace no longer fits.
- Use a fluoride mouthwash if we or your dentist advise it, at a different time from brushing.
- Keep seeing your regular dentist for check-ups.

Looking after **your brace**

- When it is out of your mouth, **keep it in its hard case**. Never wrap it in a tissue – it is easily thrown away. Keep it away from pets (dogs love to chew braces).
- Hold the clasps with your fingertips when you take it out or put it in.
- **Keep your model safe.** This is the model of your teeth we gave you when your brace was fitted.
- **Musical instruments:** if you play a wind or brass instrument, ask us whether to take your brace out while playing.

If your brace **breaks or gets lost**

Always bring the model of your teeth with you:

- **If your brace breaks:** bring it back with your model and we will repair it **free of charge**. Without the model, a repair costs about **£80**.
- **If you lose your brace:** bring your model and we will make a new one **free of charge**. If you have lost the model too, there is a health service (NHS) charge of about **£110**.
- **If you lose or break your removable brace twice,** you will need to pay privately for any further repair or replacement, which costs **£250 to £500** depending on the brace.

Turning the screw (if your brace has one)

- **We will tell you how often to turn the screw**, usually once or twice a week. Use the key we gave you and turn in the direction of the arrow.
- Your brace may feel tight for a day or so. This is normal. If it stops fitting, stop turning the screw and contact us.

Problems and **what to do**

Problem	What to do
Rubbing or a sore spot	Rinse with warm salt water a few times a day. Contact us if it does not get better in a few days.
Brace broken, loose or not fitting	Use the Broken brace form (Contact us > Broken brace) at portadownorthodontics.co.uk/broken-brace.html. Sharp and causing pain? Call us. Keep wearing it if you can, unless we tell you to stop. Bring all the pieces and your model.
Wire bent	Do not bend it yourself. Contact us.
Brace lost	Use the Broken brace form as soon as possible. Your teeth may move back without it.
Pain that does not settle	Contact us.
Knock to the face or a broken tooth	Get urgent dental advice from your regular dentist, then let us know what they have advised.

Your **appointments**

- We will usually see you every few weeks to check your progress and adjust your brace. Bring your brace every time. If you cannot come, tell us as soon as possible.
- **If you repeatedly miss appointments, we may have to stop your treatment early**, as brace treatment needs to be monitored closely.
- At your appointments you will be seen by members of our orthodontic team, including orthodontic therapists, our dentist with enhanced skills in orthodontics, Dr Méabh Maguire, and our specialist orthodontist.

Questions **or problems?**

Clinic name	Heathwood House	**Phone**	028 3870 2623
Email	heathwoodhouse@djmaguiredentists.co.uk		
Opening hours	Mon–Thu 8am–5pm; Fri 8am–4pm (usually closed 1–2pm)		

Please have your name and date of birth ready when you contact us.