



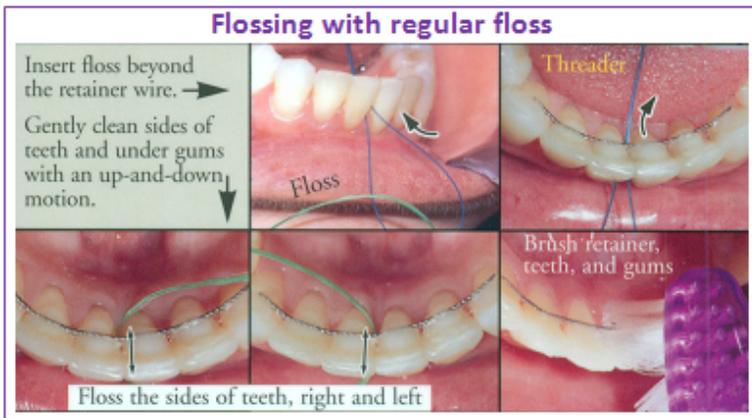
FIXED RETAINER 'RULES & REGULATIONS'

What is a fixed retainer?

The fixed retainer is a thin wire that is carefully adapted and bonded to the inside surfaces of the front 4 or 6 teeth. Because they are permanent, there is no chance of losing them or forgetting to wear them. The fixed retainer will prevent the front teeth from shifting after orthodontic treatment has been completed.

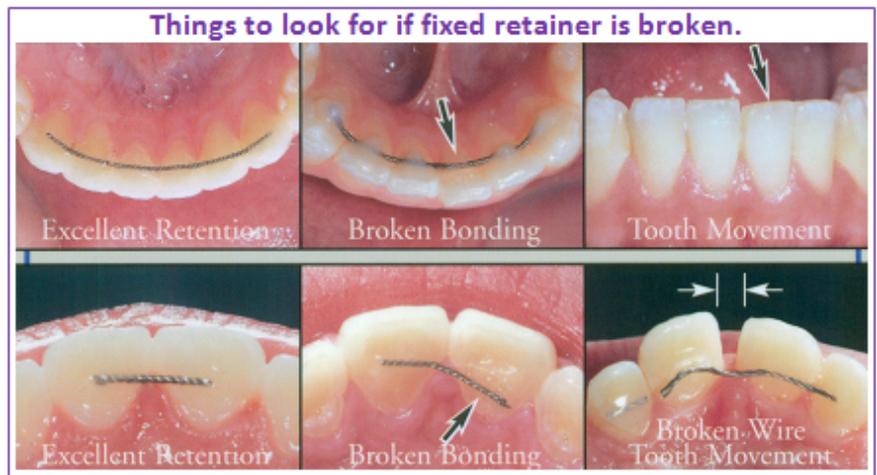
Caring for your fixed retainer

Fixed retainers require diligent cleaning to prevent cavities and buildup of calculus, which may lead to periodontal (gum) disease. Please follow the instructions on proper flossing of the retainers with a floss-threader to get underneath it. A waterflosser may also be used. Routine dental cleaning by your general dentist or hygienist could be and should be done on a routine basis. More frequent dental cleaning visits are highly recommended (i.e. every 3 months instead of every 6 months). If during a retention visit it becomes obvious that maintenance of your retainer is inadequate we will review hygiene for care of the fixed retainer. If poor hygiene continues the fixed retainer will be removed and replaced with a removable one. Leaving a fixed retainer in a poor oral environment may result in severe damage to your teeth and supporting structures.



What can happen to your fixed retainer?

It is up to you to keep an eye on the alignment of your teeth and condition of the fixed retainer. As with any other appliance, improper care may lead to breakage of the appliance. **IF THE RETAINER IS LOOSE ON ONE OR TWO TEETH, PLEASE DO NOT PULL IT OUT.** It may be an easy fix. Promptly call our office to schedule an appointment during our regular business hours. Also if you find that there is a difference in the way the retainer feels please contact the office to schedule an appointment to have the retainer checked. It is your responsibility to report problems with your fixed retainer as soon as possible. Ignoring a problem may lead to tooth movement. **Correction of relapse that happened as a result of a patient's negligence will require time, effort and expense of additional treatment.** The expense involved would depend on the time required to realign your teeth back to the point at which orthodontic treatment was completed.



How long will I have a fixed retainer?

Like any other organ in the body, teeth will not stay the same throughout life. Certain changes in the jaw joints and bite patterns may lead to shifting of the alignment. It is our "unofficial" recommendation that you should maintain some sort of retainer throughout life. If your treatment has been completed as an adult – your use of a retainer should be indefinite. For teens active retention follow-up will be until 20 years of age or at least 5 years post treatment