



# Helping Hands

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## WEARING A REMOVABLE APPLIANCE (RETAINER)

### What to Expect

- ❖ The doctor or dental assistant will show you how to place and remove the retainers or appliances.
- ❖ At first, this appliance may feel tight. You may notice an increased flow of saliva (water in your mouth). This is normal and will decrease as you get used to wearing the retainer.
  - o Teeth on which there is pressure will be sore initially. Your child may take an over the counter pain reliever (such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen) that your child typically takes for normal discomfort as needed for the first day or two. Please be sure to follow the manufacturer's dosage instructions for the product you choose. If your child has asthma, please be certain to only use Tylenol or acetaminophen products.
- ❖ Your speech may be slurred until you get used to the appliance. This usually will only last for 24-48 hours.
- ❖ **It is very important that you wear this appliance 24 hours a day.** Appliances break most often when they are not in the mouth.
- ❖ You may remove the appliance **only** when you eat, brush your teeth, or play sports.

### Daily Care

- ❖ It is very important that you keep your appliance clean.
- ❖ Do this at least twice a day.
- ❖ Frequent rinsing with water will help remove food and other debris.
- ❖ **NEVER** wrap your appliance in a napkin or paper towel. It might get thrown away!
- ❖ Do not put your appliance in your purse or pocket because it may get broken. Keep it in your mouth!

### Diet

- ❖ Basically, the diet need not be changed.
- ❖ Depending on the appliance, there may be some foods that cannot be eaten with the appliance in the mouth. This varies with individuals and their food habits.
- ❖ We encourage you to eat with the appliance in place. Most people have few problems after the first 24 hours.
- ❖ Chewy candies, gum and caramels are not to be eaten.

### Problems

- ❖ If your retainer breaks or is lost, call our office as soon as possible.
- ❖ If wires are bent into the gums this will require an appointment to adjust.
- ❖ Sometimes with normal wear small pieces of plastic will break off. This is not a problem unless it is irritating to the gums or tongue. If so, then please call.
- ❖ When the appliance is worn regularly the correction is accomplished in a shorter period of time. Please contact our office if the appliance is not being worn.