TOOTH POSITIONER APPLIANCE

As part of your final phase of orthodontic treatment, you or your child have been given a tooth positioner. This appliance is made specifically for you from models obtained from impressions that were taken after braces were removed. The wear of the positioner appliance is intended to be a relatively short duration (three weeks to two months). The purpose of this appliance is to prevent relapse and continue to train the muscles around your finished product, so that your teeth can settle without the pressure of tongue and cheek forces. It also can be used if relapse is seen many months to years after treatment.

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 than the final wires could; otherwise, these final tooth movements may have taken months longer with the braces. The positioner also will maintain your teeth in these new positions (like a retainer) and also will help close the spaces remaining between your back teeth after the bands are removed.

Placement of Your Positioner – Place your positioner on the upper molars one side at a time. Stretch you positioner securely into place making sure all teeth fit into the tooth indentations. Next, fit your lower teeth into the positioner sockets and then clench your teeth. DO NOT bite sideways or use a chewing motion as this will cause damage to your positioner.

Wearing Your Positioner - It is essential that you “exercise” in the following manner while wearing the positioner. Use a small, straight up and down biting motion and make sure that your teeth still are fitting into the proper spots of the positioner. This clenching into the positioner should continue as frequently as possible. Do not use a chewing or sideways motion as this may damage the appliance. Your teeth will be sore at first. This mild discomfort means the positioner is working and your teeth are moving into their final positions. Discomfort can be relieved by taking ibuprofen (e.g. Motrin or Advil) or Tylenol.
We ask you to wear your positioner as directed (usually as much as possible) until your next appointment. Initially, you will wear your positioner for the next 24 hours, except when eating. Then you will start wearing the positioner at least 4 hours daily with 15-20 second intervals of clenching, and continue with nightly wear. You will continue wearing the positioner for three weeks, 4 hours daily and through the night.

We will check you 3 weeks after positioner delivery to take your final records and determine when you will be getting your retainers. This decision is based on how well you have been wearing the positioner and how your teeth look.

It is important to clean your positioner thoroughly as least once a day by scrubbing it with a stiff toothbrush and toothpaste. You also may soak it in mouthwash. Do not put your positioner into hot or boiling water or in the dishwasher as this will cause distortion and possibly melt the appliance. Also, do not leave your positioner where household pets (dogs/cats) can get to them. Dogs, especially, are attracted to the scent of the positioner. Always put your positioner in the plastic case when not wearing it.

When you are instructed to discontinue regular positioner wear, please do not discard it. The positioner should be kept in a safe place. If you are unable to wear your retainer(s) in the future for any reason, you should go back to wearing the positioner until your retainers are replaced or repaired. In addition, the positioner can be used in years to come to retrain your teeth if needed.

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