

PATIENT CARE

Headgear is used to help guide the teeth into a better position.

Regular wear of your headgear achieves the best results. Forgetting to wear your headgear will lengthen your treatment.

In the beginning, the wear of your headgear can be minimal. This is to allow you to adjust to this new appliance. This should only be for the first week, then your headgear wear should increase gradually until you reach a minimum of **12 hours per night**.

If you are going on camp or staying over at a friend's house, you may leave your headgear at home.

Marking the number of hours you wear your headgear on your calendar will help you along the way.

You may experience some discomfort in the initial days of wearing your headgear, however this will decrease as your mouth adjusts to the changes.

Brushing with this appliance will require more care. The areas to focus on are the bands around the molars as food and plaque can be easily trapped here.

Diet

Your diet is important, and it is essential that you follow these recommendations to ensure the best outcome of your treatment:

- Avoid any hard sticky and chewy foods. These foods include lollies, chocolate bars, bubble gums, hard biscuits, ice, etc.
- Other foods to be wary of are raw fruits and vegetables (cut into bite size pieces), corn on the cob, meat off the bone, etc.
- Consumption of any food or drinks high in sugar may compromise the short term and long term health of your teeth. So any soft drinks or cola flavoured items need to be avoided to get the best result possible.

Wax

Wax is provided to you during treatment to help ease any discomfort that may occur. The braces may rub and irritate your cheeks and wax is designed to work as a band aid in these areas. Warm saltwater rinses can also help with the healing of ulcers. Give it time and your body will adjust so the presence of the braces and ulcers will lessen.

Extra Appointments

Should any issues arise during treatment, such as broken bands, we are happy to see you for an extra appointment. It is best to call ahead and schedule an appointment for these visits. Peak times are between 3pm and 5pm so it may be difficult to see you in the late afternoon period.

For many of these appointments you will be seen by our Dental Therapist. They work alongside the Orthodontist to better care for your teeth.

Please call us with any questions or queries. We are always happy to help.

To fit your headgear

1. Locate the large tubes that are attached to the bands on the back teeth.
2. Insert both inner face bow wires into the mouth, then place one side of the inner face bow wire into the back tube on one side of the mouth.
3. In placing the other inner side wire in the tube, you very gently apply an inward pressure.
4. Once inserted you may then fit the neck strap, holding the front of the face bow to stop it slipping out of the tube as the neck strap is attached.

The neck strap is ONLY to be adjusted by the Orthodontist.

To remove your headgear

1. To remove the neck strap, hold the front of the face bow and gently remove the rubber neck strap. Then slide the other side of the strap off the face bow.
2. To remove the face bow. Wiggle face bow gently from side to side until one side comes out – let it go loose then remove other side. Don't wiggle the face bow up and down as this may loosen the bands that have been cemented to the upper molar teeth.

Remember, if resistance is felt, don't force the face bow to remove it, but change the angle from which you are pulling.

Important

1. **Always be careful to remove the headgear as you were shown.**
If the headgear is removed carelessly, it may cause injury to your cheeks, lips or face.
2. **Never try to remove the headgear until the straps have been disconnected.**
3. **Never try to lift the headgear over your face.**
4. **Never wear headgear when running or playing sports.** These include rough and tumble games. Accidents can occur even when you are just having fun.
5. **Never allow anyone to grab or pull on your headgear.**
6. **Bring your headgear to every appointment.**