

Orthodontic Treatment With Fixed Braces

Fixed braces or 'train tracks' as they are commonly known straighten crooked teeth and improve the way upper and lower teeth meet. This results in a nice smile and great looking teeth. Fixed braces are carefully glued to the teeth. They gradually move teeth into better positions within the mouth. It is common during orthodontic treatment for some teeth to be removed. This helps to give space in your mouth into which the other teeth can move. If this is necessary, we will tell you and usually your dentist will take them out.



Benefits of Orthodontic Treatment include:

- Improvement in the appearance of the teeth and smile by aligning the upper and lower dental arches, correcting spacing and crowding.
- Reduction the likelihood of damage to prominent teeth.

How long will I have to wear braces?

- Treatment with fixed braces usually takes between two or three years to complete.
- Once a fixed brace has been taken off, you will be given 'retainer' braces. It is essential these are worn as they hold the teeth in their new positions. **If you wish to maintain straight teeth indefinitely, you must wear retainers indefinitely.**
- Retainers are usually removable braces worn full- time for six months followed by a period of night time wear for a further six months. Retainers can also be fixed and are glued to the teeth. The type of retainer depends on each case and will be discussed by your orthodontist.

Fitting Fixed braces

- Fitting braces takes about an hour and is not usually painful. The metal squares are attached to the teeth with special glue. The wire is then placed in the metal squares. The glue is not harmful and you will not need an injection for the procedure.

How will I feel after the brace is fitted?

- It will take a few days to get used to the braces once they are in place. It is likely that your teeth will be sore at first but simple painkillers (e.g. paracetamol) or whatever you normally use for pain relief, and a soft diet will help. Sometimes parts of the brace will rub against the lips or cheeks. We will give you soft wax to help with this. **Do not** try to remove or adjust the brace yourself.

Caring for fixed braces

It is extremely important to keep your teeth very clean when wearing fixed braces. Poor cleaning and a high sugar diet can lead to tooth decay and harms the gums. If your teeth and gums are not kept clean we may have to remove your braces before the end of treatment. Eat carefully and avoid **hard** and **sticky** foods like nuts, chewing gum and toffees as they may break parts of the brace.

Dental appointments

It is essential you see your dentist for regular check-ups during treatment.

What if I have a problem with my brace?

If your brace becomes loose, damaged, broken or causes a lot of pain, you will need to attend the orthodontic emergency clinic.

Are there any risks of treatment?

Please read the risks and benefits information sheet, risks include:

- Poor cleaning around braces and a high sugar diet during treatment can cause damage to the teeth in the form of white or brown marks.
- Gum disease including bleeding gums and recession.
- Some shortening of the roots of teeth (1-2mm) is common during treatment. This, in the majority of cases, does not cause any significant long-term problem.
- Teeth with big fillings in them or that have had trauma can die over a long period of time, with or without braces.

Please be aware of the following:

It is important we are able to see your head and face during treatment. Please be aware you may be asked to remove hijabs, caps, scarves, jackets or any clothing that covers your face when you attend.

Fixed braces are never fitted on your first visit. It usually takes a few visits of careful planning prior to the braces being fitted. We may stop treatment if you:

- **Regularly miss appointments**
- **Regularly attend late**
- **Constantly break your brace**
- **Fail to keep your teeth and/or gums healthy**

The Royal London Hospital is a teaching hospital and as such you may receive treatment from dentists in training. Therefore, routine appointments may occasionally be lengthy.

Appointments are only available between 9 am – 4.30 pm Monday to Friday

Please try to arrive 15 minutes before your appointment.

Emergency clinics

Please contact our team on

020 7767 3200 to get an emergency appointment. The clinics run Monday-Thursday 0900-0930.

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