

# Space Maintainer

## Information Guide



### WHAT IS A SPACE MAINTAINER?

If a baby tooth is lost prematurely, the surrounding teeth will drift into the space. This leads to a loss of space for the adult tooth to erupt and a crowding problem can develop. Space maintainers help hold the space for unerupted adult teeth when baby teeth are lost prematurely. They come in various designs.



Lingual Arch Design



Band and Loop Design

### APPOINTMENT SCHEDULE

A couple of appointments are required to make and insert the space maintainer.

#### **Appointment 1: Intra-oral Scan (10 mins)**

A 3-D digital scan is taken of the teeth and forwarded to a local laboratory, where the space maintainer is made with a combination of 3-D printing and traditional laboratory techniques.

#### **Appointment 2: Inserting your space maintainer (30 mins)**

The teeth are polished and the space maintainer is cemented to the teeth with a dental adhesive. Care instructions are also given.

Subsequent appointments with the orthodontist are usually scheduled every 4-6 months to monitor the development of the teeth and jaws. The space maintainer usually stays in place until the associated adult tooth or teeth have erupted.



## CARING FOR THE SPACE MAINTAINER

Teeth should be cleaned every morning and night with a toothbrush and toothpaste. Brush the space maintainer at the same time, taking care to remove any food that may be caught around it. It should look shiny if it has been cleaned well!

## WHAT CAN I EAT?

Sweet and acidic food and drinks are best avoided, as they can damage the teeth. It is also important to avoid eating hard or sticky foods, as they may cause the space maintainer to break or loosen.

**For more information please see our Food Guide.**

## WILL THERE BE ANY DISCOMFORT?

A space maintainer is a passive appliance, so we don't expect extended dental discomfort. However, mild pain relieving medication can be taken, if required.

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