



Dear Patient/Parent,

15th May 2020

Response to Covid-19 Pandemic for Patients Undergoing Orthodontic Treatment **All appointments at all sites of Making Smiles have been temporarily suspended.** This decision has been taken in order to minimise the close personal contact that occurs in waiting rooms and in the surgeries in order to protect patients, parents/carers, clinicians and staff. We aim to open again as soon as possible based on the public health advice we receive. This is reviewed daily.

We understand this can be a worrying time for us all. So, we have prepared this Q&A sheet to answer some common questions which may arise.

#### **IMPORTANT NOTE**

- **Please only attend this appointment if you are free of the symptoms of Coronavirus (ie. no persistent cough or high temperature)**
- specific guidance on when to isolate for 7 days versus 14 days can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-for-householdswith-possible-covid-19-infection>
- anyone with these symptoms who is WELL can stay at home and does not need to engage with NHS111 or be tested.
- anyone with these symptoms who is UNWELL should go to NHS111 online first for advice, rather than approaching their GP practice or pharmacy

#### **Common Questions:**

##### • **Why has the Practice closed?**

This is done in line with national and local government guidelines. The Practice has reduced patient contact as we feel this is how best we can protect the staff and public during this challenging time. Also, it is possible our clinicians may be redeployed to other areas of the NHS to assist the fight against the virus and we want to be available to help.

#### **For patients currently wearing fixed appliances:**

- Continue to look after your appliances as previously directed. Please ensure that you keep them clean; our advice is to clean three times per day.
- Please be aware that loose/fractured/lost orthodontic brackets and wires do not constitute a serious orthodontic emergency; if a portion of your appliance is 'digging in' and causing discomfort, please place wax over the offending area.
- We have made two short videos giving excellent advice about the home management of orthodontic emergencies; these can be viewed on our Facebook page.

#### **For patients wearing orthodontic ELASTIC BANDS**

- If (at your most recent appointment with us), you were asked to wear these fulltime, please continue to do so for 6 weeks from the date of that appointment. After this time, continue to wear the elastics, but at night only. You will need to cease the wear of elastics when/if you run out. Please email us at that stage, so that a note can be entered into your clinical card.
- If (at your most recent appointment with us), you were asked to wear these at night only, please continue to do so until you run out. Please email us at that stage, so that a note can be entered into your clinical card.
- If you have any urgent queries regarding the pattern or timings etc of your elastic band wear, please email us (see above).

### **For Patients Wearing Removable Appliances (Upper Jaw & Lower Jaw - Twin Blocks)**

- Please continue to wear your appliance exactly as directed at your most recent appointment
- If you are using a 'key' to turn a 'screw' in the upper appliance, please continue and complete the number of turns that you were directed to carry out. Once completed, please stop turning but continue to wear the appliance full time.
- If you have been asked to turn the screw either once a week or twice a week until your next appointment, please continue to do so for another 8 weeks only, but continue to wear the appliance full time thereafter.
- If your appliance breaks, please contact us by email. Please attach a photograph of the broken appliance.

### **For Patients Wearing Orthodontic Retainers & INVISALIGN ALIGNERS**

- Please continue to wear your retainers/aligners exactly as directed as your most recent appointment
- If your retainer(s)/aligners break, please contact us urgently by email. Please attach a photograph of the broken retainer(s)/aligners.
- Invisalign patients will be contacted in the next few days.

### **Other Frequently Asked Questions:**

#### **What is a brace/retainer emergency?**

If part of the brace is causing pain, or you are worried you may swallow or breathe it in, then please contact the Practice. Another example of an emergency would be a lost or broken retainer which no longer fits.

If you are not sure, you can call us for advice. If the brace is sharp then orthodontic wax can be used or the wax covering of a Baby-Bel or Edam cheese can make a good alternative.

A broken/loose bracket which is still attached to the wire is not an emergency and can wait.

Please see the Orthodontic emergency advice sheet in patient in the patient information section.

#### **I've got a loose bracket, should I call you?**

No - this is not an emergency unless it is causing pain.

#### **My appointment has been cancelled. When will I be seen?**

We will be contacting patients with existing appointments to inform them of the cancellation.

Unfortunately, we cannot make another appointment at this stage. We will contact you as soon as we know the date, we can re-open. We will work hard to see everyone asap so we thank you for your understanding in this matter.

#### **Will this affect my brace treatment?**

The main effect of suspending treatment may result in lengthening of your brace treatment but the final result is likely to be the same. In the vast majority of cases however the brace will continue to work nicely and undertake the beneficial treatment we are aiming for.

Most appliances are safe and stable to leave for many months if a good standard of toothbrushing is well maintained.

#### **What about the elastics I'm wearing?**

You should continue to wear your elastics until the date of your original appointment. On this date wear the elastics at night only. This puts the treatment in a holding phase.

If you have been told by the clinician to monitor the front bite and you notice it getting worse, then contact the practice for advice.

#### **I've broken / lost my retainer what should I do?**

You should call the Practice for advice.

#### **I was due to be seen for a first/New appointment. Will I have to wait long?**

No - Your appointment will be rearranged and prioritised to be seen ASAP.

#### **I've had symptoms of the virus and am having brace/retainer problems. What should I do?**

Do not come to the Practice. Self-isolate and if symptoms worsen call NHS 111

**I've had teeth out but no brace fitted. What should I do?**

Do not worry. There is usually no problem with the delay. If you very concerned, then contact the practice for advice.

**I'm due to have teeth out at my dentist, should I still go?**

You should take your dentist's advice. It may be best to wait to have your teeth out once you have a new appointment to fit your brace.

**My dentist won't take my teeth out like you asked. What should I do?**

You should take your dentist's advice. We can rearrange appointments to fit around this.

**I was due to have my brace off. Do I have to wait?**

Yes - We know this is very disappointing, but we feel this is in the best health interests of staff, patients and public. If you have special concerns, please contact the Practice.

**I've finished self-isolation. Can I come in?**

No – Your routine appointments will be cancelled. You should contact the Practice only if you have an emergency.

**When will this all end?**

We don't know, but we will be acting on expert advice as it becomes available and will contact our patients accordingly.

**When will you open again?**

We don't know. We will contact you as soon as possible when we have this information available.

If you have any questions or concerns that have not been dealt with above, please email us using the email addresses [makingsmiles@nhs.net](mailto:makingsmiles@nhs.net) .

You can also contact us on our usual practice number for any information not covered above.

- Wycombe central 01494 442021
- Desborough site 01494 436839
- Amersham 01494 726886
- **Please only call us if you have a genuine emergency** 07575593888

We will be available by phone during our normal working hours.

**We understand fully that you will be concerned about the implications of treatment being suspended. Please be reassured that we will continue treatment in a timely fashion once the pandemic has been controlled and the risk to both patients and staff has reduced.**

**There are some important steps that you/your child can follow to ensure you achieve the best results from treatment:**

1. Please ensure you/they maintain the highest level of oral hygiene by brushing effectively three times a day and using small interdental/interspace brushes to clean behind the wires. Use a fluoride mouthwash once a day. Use this video for instruction: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpxMwiLRQyY>
2. Please ensure you/they follow the necessary dietary restrictions: no fizzy drinks (including diet/sports drinks), no chewing gum, toffees or other sweets. Limit other sweet foods, such as biscuits and cakes/puddings to mealtimes. Avoid very hard foods.

With our best wishes at this very difficult time,

**Dr. Aneel Jaisinghani**

Director Consultant and Specialist Orthodontist  
Making Smiles Orthodontic Practice