

# 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

Space maintainers are custom made for each patient. This means a few appointments are required before the space maintainer is inserted.

#### **Appointment 1: Separators (5 mins)**

Small rubber rings, called separators, are placed adjacent to the teeth that require the band(s). They should remain there until the next appointment.

#### **Appointment 2: Band Fit and Impression (20 mins)**

The separators are removed and a band is fitted around the tooth or teeth. An impression is taken of the teeth and bands. These are sent to our lab technician who custom makes the space maintainer. New separators are inserted, if required.

#### **Appointment 3: Inserting your space maintainer (30 mins)**

The separators are removed, the teeth polished and the space maintainer is cemented to the teeth. Care instructions are also given.

## 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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