

Patient information leaflet

Functional Appliance

What is a functional appliance?

A functional appliance is a removable brace that works on the upper and lower teeth at the same time.

How much do I need to wear the braces?

The number of hours per day that you are expected to wear the brace will be explained to you (usually full time wear). For the treatment to work it is important you follow these instructions. With the correct number of hours of wear you may find the improvement in the position of your teeth can be quite dramatic. A daily **fluoride mouth rinse** should be used **last thing at night**, after tooth brushing. Failure to keep your teeth and brace clean will lead to **permanent scarring** of your teeth.

Will it be painful?

It is likely to be sore for about **3-5 days** each time the brace is adjusted. If necessary, painkillers such as ones you would normally take for a headache may help (please read the instruction on the packet). If there is an obvious area of soreness as a result of the brace, ring for an appointment as soon as it is reasonably possible. If possible **do not** stop wearing the brace or else you will have to go through the 3-5 days of discomfort all over again when you start wearing once more.

How else will it affect me?

Your speech will be different. Practice speaking with the braces in place *e.g.* read out aloud at home on your own, and in this way your speech will return to normal within a couple of days. You may also find yourself swallowing a lot to begin with.

Can I eat normally?

You may not be able to eat with your *functional appliance* in place. You will be advised about this. If you have been told to take it out for eating, make sure it is placed in a **protective box**. A suitable box will be recommended to you. For your orthodontic treatment to work well and in the shortest possible time it is important you take care of

your teeth and brace. In order to prevent damage to both, you should avoid the following:

- **Toffees, boiled sweets, sugared chewing gum, chocolate bars, etc.**
- **Fizzy drinks** including **diet drinks, excessive** amounts of fruit juice.

Can I remove the brace?

The brace you are now wearing is *removable* but **should only be removed for eating, cleaning and sports**, unless you are otherwise advised. When it is not in your mouth it should be in its **protective box**. **Do not** click the brace in and out with your tongue as this will break the wires and increase the length of time the treatment will take.

How long will treatment take?

This can vary according to how severe your case is. Most of the work with this brace is usually completed in about **9-12 months**. You may then have to wear the brace at nights for a while or you may progress to a second phase of treatment with a different type of braces. You will be advised about this. **Failed** and **cancelled appointments** or **repeated breakages** of the brace will add to this overall treatment time.

How often will I need an appointment?

You will need **regular** appointments during treatment for the brace to be adjusted.

Do I still need to see my regular dentist?

Yes. It will be important you still have check-ups with your regular dentist throughout orthodontic treatment so that your teeth can be checked for decay.

What if I play contact sports?

You should wear a **gumshield** instead of your *functional appliance* when you play contact sports. This will also be the case if you enjoy riding a **bicycle, roller-skating** or **skateboarding**. When not in your mouth the brace should be in a **protective box**.

Contact us

If you are concerned about your condition following this operation or if you need advice, please contact the Reception between 9.00am - 5.00pm Monday to Friday on 0207 924 4224, so we can arrange an urgent appointment for you.