



# All About Phase I Retention

**CONGRATULATIONS!** You have completed your Phase I orthodontic treatment! Now we have to work together during your **RETENTION** phase to stabilize the result of your orthodontic treatment. Your tongue, lips, cheeks, and gums must adapt over time to the new position of your teeth. Retainers prevent the teeth from moving back towards their original position.

According to orthodontic research and clinical experience, about 95% of your orthodontic correction can be retained. Just as the rest of your body changes over time, your teeth will not stay exactly where we have placed them for the rest of your life, because they will make adaptive changes to function in the most efficient manner for your particular mouth and bite. This really is not a failure of your orthodontic treatment, but a natural change that we have learned to accept.

The retention phase is the **PATIENT'S RESPONSIBILITY**. In order to protect your investment in your teeth and to maintain them in the alignment and position that we have established with your braces, **YOU MUST WEAR AND CARE FOR THE RETAINERS EXACTLY AS WE INSTRUCT YOU TO**. We will schedule an office visit 2 months after removal of your braces and placement of your retainers. Your second retention appointment will be 4 months after your first retention appointment, with the following observation appointments every 6 months. **PLEASE BRING YOUR RETAINER(S) TO EVERY RETENTION AND OBSERVATION VISIT.**

Your retainers will be monitored by our office for a period of time, usually 1 to 3 years, until Phase II orthodontic treatment is needed for you. Phase II treatment most often occurs somewhere between the ages of 12 to 14, depending on your individual growth and development.

There most likely will be a point in time, due to the eruption of additional permanent teeth, that your retainer will no longer fit. This is expected. Small changes in the current position of your teeth is anticipated as you grow and can be addressed during any necessary Phase II treatment. However, since our office does not see you as frequently during retention, we must rely on you to know if your retainers fit properly. If you do not wear your retainers as instructed, they eventually will not fit properly. If you suspect that the retainers do not fit well, or if one or both of them breaks or is lost, it is imperative that our office be notified immediately so they can be inspected, adjusted, repaired, or replaced before any tooth shifting occurs. If you wait too long to contact us, unwanted shifting of your teeth can possibly occur, which may possibly only be correctable through re-treatment with braces or clear aligners. Because retainers are expensive appliances, **THERE WILL BE AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE FOR REPAIRING OR REPLACING BROKEN OR LOST RETAINERS**, so please be careful!

Once again, congratulations! We are so excited about your new smile! Please contact our office if you have any questions or concerns during your Phase I retention phase.