

Headgear

Purpose

The headgear is a very important part of your treatment. It can be used to correct jaw growth and bite problems as well as to create space for permanent teeth. Without proper and consistent headgear wear, ideal treatment and correction may be impossible. Always bring your headgear with you when you come to the office.

Parts

The headgear assembly is made up of a few different parts. The metal “face bow” is the part that fits into your mouth. The neck strap fits around your neck. Attached to the neck strap are two safety release traction modules. These are adjusted to control the amount of pressure in the headgear system.

Please Be Careful!

Force is placed on the device. Never allow anyone to pull the metal face bow from your mouth. Do not wear the headgear during contact sports such as soccer, football, or wrestling.

Initial Adjustment

Mild to moderate soreness is to be expected. Ibuprofen (recommended) or Tylenol is all that should be needed. Practice placing your headgear and removing it. With practice, this becomes very easy – but you have to practice and be patient. Remember to remove your headgear gently. Jerking the headgear out or wiggling it will result in sore teeth, loose molar bands, increased treatment time, and added expense.

Wear Time – 14 Hours is the Magic Number

Unless you are instructed otherwise, your goal is to reach 14 hours of wear each and every day. However, when you are first becoming accustomed to your headgear, take your time. Within two to three weeks of starting your headgear, you should be wearing it the full 14 hours per day. The 14 hours does not have to be all at one time. As long as your total at least 14 hours out of 24 hours, you’ll do very well. Remember, if you only wear the headgear 11 hours per day, then you’re missing three hours each day. That means you’re losing 21 hours every week. At that rate, we’ll never get your teeth in the right position. Remember, patients who consistently wear their headgear for 14 hours every day achieve excellent results in the shortest amount of time.

How will I get 14 hours every day?

get home from school at 4:00 pm and wear your headgear until 6:00 pm, that's two hours. Put it back on at 7:00 pm and wear it all night until the next morning at 7:00 am. And that's it – 14 hours!

That depends on four factors: 1) how consistently you get that 14 hours; 2) how much correction needs to be done; 3) how fast your face is growing; and 4) what your individual treatment response is. Without a doubt, the most critical factor is your completion of 14 hour every day. If you can wear it to school (even if you get an additional three hours of wear at school in the morning) and get more than 14 hours, you'll finish that much more quickly. Average treatment time is 12-14 months of full time (14 hours per day) wear.

You'll change to wearing it during sleep only. This helps to stabilize the results. Gradually, you'll decrease the amount of time you wear it until you stop.

Patients must not play with the headgear. Hard, sticky or brittle foods such as Jolly Ranchers, Gummy Bears, Now & Laters, Skittles, taffy, gum, Eye Poppers or ice will loosen or destroy the molar bands to which the headgear is attached. This will result in discomfort and added expense. These types of food must not be put into your mouth at all. Carrots, apples, steak, pizza or similar foods should be cut into small pieces before being chewed. Teeth should be brushed and flossed in the usual manner.

Trouble Shooting

If a band does come loose, carefully try to remove it from your tooth. Place the band in an envelope and bring it with you when you come to the office. If the band will not come off, but it stays in place on the tooth, stop wearing your headgear. Call the office for an appointment to have the band re-cemented. Please call us early in the day so we can arrange for you to be seen. A true emergency is when something is loose or broken and you can't fix it and you are unable to eat. If something like that happens, call the office at 782-2207 and follow the emergency instructions.

****ALWAYS BRING YOUR HEADGEAR TO OFFICE APPOINTMENTS****

If you have any questions or concerns, call us at 782-2207 – we're here to help!