



ASHBURN
PEDIATRIC DENTAL CENTER
(703) 726-4333

ORTHODONTIC APPLIANCE FACT SHEET

Invisalign

Invisalign is a series of removable clear aligners that slowly move your teeth to the desired position.

Things to Know

- **Aligner Wear Instructions:**

- In order for Invisalign to work properly, the aligners must be worn **22 hours per day**. Only remove them to eat, drink, and brush your teeth. You can leave them in place while drinking room temperature to cold water **ONLY**. **If you leave them in your mouth while drinking beverages with sugar, you are at risk for developing permanent stains (demineralizations) and cavities on your teeth.**
- Insert the aligner by placing it over the front teeth and gently applying pressure to seat it, then move with pressure towards the back teeth. Sometimes the aligners can get stuck on the inside cusps of your back teeth. If that happens, don't continue to apply pressure. Gently roll the aligners towards the inside of the mouth to slide over the inside cusp tips. Then apply pressure to fully seat the aligner.
- Remove the aligners in the opposite direction, from the back to the front.

- **Aligner Care and Oral Hygiene:**

- When you remove the aligners to brush your teeth, also, thoroughly, but gently, brush them with your toothbrush and toothpaste. Soaking them in water with Retainer Brite or Efferdent tablets once a week will also keep them clean and prevent build-up of plaque and tartar.
- Never use hot water when cleaning and soaking your aligners or allow them to be exposed to extreme heat (such as leaving them on the dashboard of the car on a summer day), as this can distort your aligners and make them ineffective.
- When you remove your aligners to eat, always place them in the aligner case provided. Never place them in a tissue or napkin, as these are often discarded in the trash.
- It is best to brush your teeth after every meal before you replace your aligners. If you can't, at least rinse your mouth with water to remove any food particles.
- Keep your aligners out of reach of pets, as they like to use them as chew-toys.
- You are provided with red and blue aligner cases. It is recommended to keep the current aligner you are wearing in the blue case. Keep your last aligner in the red case. Never throw away your last aligner until you move on. You always want to have a back-up aligner.
- If you lose or break an aligner, call the office for guidance on what to do. We might direct you to proceed to the next aligner or we might ask you to place your last aligner back in and we will order you a replacement set. This depends on how long you have been wearing your current aligner.
- Please remember to wear your current aligners to the office for your appointment, as the Doctor will check the fit of these aligners to ensure proper tooth movement.

- **Period of Adjustment:**
 - Since these are new appliances, you will go through a period of adjustment. You may notice increased saliva, slight speech impairment, and areas of tenderness. This is normal and usually resolves in a few days. Continuous wear of the aligners will speed this process.
 - Speak out loud as much as possible during the first couple of days to allow your tongue to get used to the aligners.

- **Materials to Help Adjustment Period:**
 - Sometimes, while getting used to your aligners, you might notice slight irritations on your lips, cheeks and tongue. If you feel a particularly bothersome spot even after several days of adjustment, you can take an emery board and gently smooth over the irritating edge. Please call the office for an appointment if this does not solve the problem.
 - **Benzodent** can be applied to areas that are already irritated. Benzodent will form a layer over the top of the irritation that will prevent it from getting worse. It also has a medicine in it that will numb the area and make it feel better while it is healing.
 - **Rincinol** can be swished in your mouth (and then spit out) when you have a lot of small areas of irritation. It will have a similar effect as the Benzodent.
 - **Peroxyl or Warm Salt Water** can also be used to rinse (and then spit out) to make areas feel better. These will both help to keep irritated areas clean and help them heal faster.
 - The **Bite Wafer** is used to exercise your teeth. During the first few days you may want to eat a softer diet. This is more comfortable since your teeth might be a little sore. Exercising your teeth with the bite wafer will help the blood flow around your gums and make the soreness go away faster.
 - Each patient is unique, and their needs are different. For some people, the use of an over-the-counter medicine similar to that taken for a headache can be used to help the soreness. If this is needed, it is usually only for a day or two.
 - **Chewies** are similar to the bite wafer. They can help relieve initial soreness. More importantly, chewies can be used to help seat the aligners in certain areas. Chewing on the chewie will help the aligner engage certain attachments to provide more predictable tooth movement.
 - **Aligner hooks** are utilized to help remove the aligners. Grasp the blue aligner hook in your hand and insert the edge of the hook under the aligner edge. Starting towards the back is usually the easiest way to disengage the aligner, then move towards the front. Slide the hook along the aligner edge and/or use your finger and thumb to grasp the aligner and pull it loose.

- **Attachments:**
 - Invisalign utilizes attachments that are bonded to the surface of your teeth to improve the predictability of tooth movement. These attachments are made of composite resin (a tooth colored filling material) that is shade matched to your tooth color. They do not connect the teeth together.
 - Attachments might be added and removed during the course of your Invisalign treatment. If you feel like an attachment has come loose, please call the office to determine the best course of action.

- **Elastics:**
 - Elastics, or rubber bands, are sometimes used to assist in tooth movement and to change the position of your bite.
 - If you will require elastics, we will instruct you as to how to hook them up and how often they should be worn. Wearing the elastics as directed will result in predictable tooth movement. If you do not wear the elastics, your treatment will be compromised and the end result might not be ideal.
 - Elastics are either attached to small cut-outs in the aligners or to small buttons bonded to the surface of your teeth.

- **Polishing:**
 - Polishing, or interproximal reduction, is sometimes used to increase space for tooth movement during Invisalign and braces treatment. If this is required it will be reviewed prior to the procedure.
 - Sometimes, prior to polishing, small rubber spacers will be flossed between the teeth to gently push the gums away from the contact point, creating easy access for a painless procedure.

- After a small space is created between the teeth, the aligners will push the adjacent teeth into that space, closing it completely, accomplishing the desired movement based on the Doctor's prescription.
- **Refinements:**
 - Invisalign utilizes refinements to help improve the predictability of tooth movement. As your teeth move, we are always monitoring the engagement of the aligner on the teeth. This basically means how well the aligner fits.
 - By monitoring the engagement, this tells us how well your teeth are moving and following the prescription of the aligners as requested by the Doctor. It is completely normal that some teeth will start to lose engagement from the aligners. This is particularly true with difficult movements, like erupting teeth.
 - Even with the best attachment placement and perfect aligner wear, we will sometimes need to perform a refinement.
 - When we perform a refinement, we will re-scan your teeth. This will re-capture the teeth at their current position and will create a new series of aligners that again fit perfectly.
 - During a refinement, we will usually remove all your old attachments and replace them with new ones as needed. This allows the attachments to provide the best possible retention to ensure more predictable tooth movement.
 - Refinements are included in the cost of your Invisalign and they are accounted for in the estimated treatment time (they will not extend your treatment time past the estimate).
 - You will usually notice that the number aligners provided in your first series will not be enough to extend to the total estimated treatment length. This is because the refinements are anticipated and included in the estimate.

Emergencies

Please call us during normal office hours if you lose or break your aligners or if any problems arise.