

Aligner Instructions

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information that you need to know in order to maximize the effectiveness of the aligners and to take proper care of them. This information is also available on my web site: <http://www.orthonj.com>. Click on the “Learning Center” link, then “Appliance Info”, then under “Aligners” click on “Instructions”.

1. Never wrap the aligner up in a napkin. This is the primary way that they get thrown away (by you or someone else who is cleaning up) or broken.
2. Do not leave the aligner out on a plate at a restaurant. The waiter can clear the table when you are not thinking about it and the aligner can be lost.
3. Unless instructed otherwise, the aligners should be worn day and night, except for eating and brushing your teeth. You should also take them out if you are drinking something hot or something other than a clear liquid.
4. Get a separate toothbrush for cleaning the aligners. Clean the aligners with your toothbrush and soapy water. If you use toothpaste, the toothpaste will dull the finish of the aligner and it will be less transparent more quickly.
5. Your speech should return to normal after a few days of wearing the aligner.
6. Your bite may feel different while the aligners are in or during the first few minutes after you take them out. This is normal.
7. Put the aligners in with your fingers; don't bite the aligners into place. This will damage and/or break them.
8. To take the aligners out, start from the back on one side and gently work around to the opposite side. Don't pull the aligner out by just pulling it all the way out on one side; this stresses the aligner in the middle and will tend to crack it in the middle.
9. Don't flip the retainers out of place and chew on them. This will damage and/or break them.
10. Use your best judgment regarding removing them for sports, swimming, singing, meetings, etc. If there is a significant risk that they will be lost or damaged if you continue to wear them while doing an activity, take them out. If you are going to take them out, put them in the case that we gave you, and remember to put them back in when you are done with the activity.
11. If I am using the aligners to move your teeth, wearing them any less than full time reduces their effectiveness, and the teeth will either move very slowly or not at all.
12. The retainers are made out of polycarbonate, which is sensitive to heat. Do not subject the aligners to heat above body temperature; they will distort and become unusable. This includes boiling them, putting them in the dishwasher, leaving them in a hot car, etc.
13. Keep the aligners away from dogs – they will chew on the aligners and break them.
14. Bring your aligners to each appointment.
15. If there is a sharp edge, you can use a nail file to smooth it off.
16. If there is any part of the aligner that is pinching your gums, set up an appointment with me so that I can fix this for you.
17. Do not put the aligners in your pocket if they are not inside the case. They can distort or break.
18. The aligners should last at least two years with good care on your part (less for people who grind their teeth at night). The most common way that they fail is by cracking. Over time they will feel stiffer than when you first got them, and they will lose some of their transparency. This is normal.
19. Never forget rule #1.