

## Headgear Instructions

Orthodontic headgear is a very important part of treatment for patients like you. Its purpose is to assist in achieving the best possible correction of your orthodontic problem. Headgear creates special forces that guide the growth of the face and jaws. It can also be used to move the molars into better positions or to keep them from moving forward. Regular use of the headgear as we have asked will achieve the best result. That is why it is very important to precisely follow our instructions on the number of hours per day that you should wear your headgear. **Always bring it with you to each appointment.** It is frequently forgotten when you come directly from school to your appointment because you usually do not wear it at school. If you do show up for your appointment without it, we will likely need to reschedule you to another time.

Orthodontic headgear, including the facebow (the metal bow that connects to your bands), has been prescribed by Dr. Riordan for use during your treatment. It must be worn only as instructed by Dr. Riordan. If removed improperly from the mouth without disconnecting the neck or head strap, the facebow may spring back and cause an injury. Always be careful to remove the headgear as you were shown. If it is removed carelessly, the facebow could injure your cheeks, lips, gums, face, or even eyes. Never, never try to remove the facebow until the strap has been disconnected. Never try to lift the facebow over your face. Never wear the headgear while running or playing sports. This includes rough-and-tumble games. Accidents can occur even while just having fun, so please be careful. Never allow anyone to grab or pull on the headgear. Brothers, sisters, or friends who do not wear headgear may not understand the dangers involved, even in play.

When you first start wearing your headgear, your teeth may feel tender or even loose the first few days. The tenderness will disappear as you adjust to the new pressure, so do not be discouraged. Mom or Dad may want you to have some Tylenol for a few days because of this. If you are wearing your headgear as we ask and you are still having some tenderness after a few more days, be sure to let Dr. Riordan know right away. The bands that you hook your headgear to may become loosened if you are not careful with what you are eating or if you are a little rough with putting on and off your headgear. Please follow our instructions very carefully and you are less likely to have problems with it or the bands.

When you first start wearing your headgear, it will be a little awkward placing and removing it. Mom or dad may have to help you with it for a few days. Be patient, and before you know it will be a breeze. The first day you will need to wear it for 2 hours. Each day after, add two hours more than the previous day until you are wearing it fourteen hours a day. Once you have reached ten hours or more, you will need to wear it during sleep. When you first start wearing it during sleep, you may remove it while you are sleeping. As you get more use to the headgear, you will stop removing it in your sleep. If you miss a few hours one day, you need to make it up the next day. It is best, however, not to miss any time. We cannot over stress how important it is to wear the headgear as we have prescribed. Not wearing it properly could require a change in the original treatment plan to another plan that could involve the removal of permanent teeth or even jaw surgery.

As said earlier, always bring your headgear to each appointment. Please do not lose your headgear. If the whole headgear and facebow are lost, it will cost \$95.00 to replace it. If only the facebow is lost, it will cost \$50.00 to replace it.

**Good luck with your Headgear! We know you can do it!**