



hallcross

dental practice

Clear Aligner treatment
during COVID-19

CLEAR ALIGNER OVERVIEW

Your Clear Aligners are clear plastic appliances that move teeth as you change from one aligner to the next. Each aligner moves your teeth a fraction of the way towards making your teeth straight. These aligners are made by many different companies but are grouped under the title of Clear Aligner Therapy (CAT).

Don't stop your treatment if you have your aligners

While you may not be able to see a dentist or orthodontist during this time, it doesn't mean your treatment is on hold. If you are currently in possession of all your aligners, you can continue your treatment as usual.

It's important to keep wearing your aligners until you see your orthodontist or dentist again. If you stop the treatment, your teeth will return to their start position, putting all that hard work to waste. Each aligner can act as a retainer and so will keep your smile straight while you wear it. You can also wear the aligner nights only to allow the teeth to stabilise.



WHAT TO DO IF...

Your aligner doesn't fit properly:

If the next aligner in the series feels tight, go back to the previous aligner. Everyone's teeth move at a different rate so the chances are you need to give your teeth a little more time.

Wear the previous aligner for a few days and then progress. Let your orthodontist know that you are going back to the previous aligner. They may instruct you to wear it for longer.

Your aligner rubs a gum or cheek:

You can use an emery board or nail file to smoothen any sharp areas that are causing discomfort.

Wax can also be used to protect the soft tissues from the aligner edges.

An attachment is loose or falls off:

Contact your orthodontist and they can instruct you on the next steps. Keep wearing the aligners as usual and keep an eye on the tooth that has come free of the attachment. If the next aligner doesn't fit, keep wearing the current aligner as a retainer.

Lost all your aligners?

Contact your orthodontist to arrange a replacement.

ADVICE FOR PATIENTS STARTING TREATMENT

If you have only seen an orthodontist for 3D scans or impressions, but haven't received your aligners, you will need to wait for the practice to open. Your aligners must always be fitted and checked by an orthodontist.

If you have the aligners but haven't had attachments fitted, you should wear the aligners you have for the prescribed length of time. This is usually one to two weeks each.

Keep hold of your previous aligners as you can always revert back to them in case something happens to the next aligners.

When you reach your last aligners in the series, usually aligner 3, wear these as retainers until you are able to see an orthodontist. You can wear the aligners at night only, then clean and store them in the morning.





ADVICE FOR PATIENTS DURING TREATMENT

If you're well into your treatment, just keep going. You will be used to wearing your aligners by now and will know what to do. Change your aligners as prescribed but take care to make sure your teeth are ready for the next step.

If the new aligner doesn't fit right, wear the previous aligner for a few days until the next one fits properly.

Keep going through your treatment until you reach the last aligners you have. Wear them for the full two-week term, then reduce the wear to nights only as you would for a retainer.

If you lose all your aligners, contact your orthodontist. It may be possible for the lab to remake your aligners using your records on file and these can then be posted to you. There is usually a charge for this service.

ADVICE FOR PATIENTS ENDING TREATMENT

If you've reached your last aligner but have attachments, you will need to wait for the practice to reopen for these to be removed. You can wear the last aligners as retainers until your orthodontist is able to see you.

Retaining your straight smile

Once you have worn your last aligners for two weeks, you can move to wearing the aligners at night only. This will allow your teeth to stabilise in their new position while also having a chance to show off your newly straightened smile in the day.

Make sure you keep the previous aligner. If you lose the aligners that you're using as retainers, you can always go back to the previous aligners as a way to keep your teeth from moving out of position.

If you have retainers:

If you've already got your retainers, make sure you wear them as prescribed by your orthodontist. If you experience any issues with your retainers, speak to your orthodontist as a replacement may be made for you. Or you can use your previous aligners as replacement retainers.

