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## Instructions for Aligner Patients

1. **Aligner wear:** Wear your aligners 22 hours per day. Take them out to eat, brush and floss. When aligners are not in the mouth they are not working, so treatment is not progressing! If periods of time pass and aligners are not in the mouth, small increments of “relapse” can occur which will greatly affect treatment responses and time.
2. **Changing Aligners:** When changing to the next aligner, doing so at night allows for easier removal in the morning and lessens any discomfort.
3. **Attachments:** Attachments are made of white composite material and are placed on the teeth to help the aligners express certain movements. It is very important that the “bumps” or attachments on the teeth engage into the corresponding “bubbles” in the Aligner.
  - Each time you place your aligner it is very important that you check to be sure the attachments are engaged. If it is not engaged, the attachment can possibly work against your treatment plan.
  - Check attachments daily and if one is chipped, broken or loose, notify your doctor promptly.
  - Aligner “Chewies” are used to aid in seating attachments and help the teeth “track” in the aligners. Use them several times a day for 5-10 minutes upon the direction of the doctor.
4. **Changing to the next set of Aligners at home:**
  - a. After 2 weeks, change to your next set of aligners. Reduced pressure does not indicate that movements are not occurring. When changing to the next aligner, doing so at night allows for easier removal in the morning and lessens any discomfort. If you have any sharp edges on an aligner, you may use an emory board to smooth it. Make sure that the aligners snap down over the attachments fully. Biting on chewies or cotton rolls will help.

- b. Floss between all of your teeth with unwaxed floss. If any areas between teeth are tight enough to fray or rip the floss DO NOT change the aligner. Call our office for advice or an appointment, so the doctor can advise you about moving forward to the next aligner.

**5. Other IMPORTANT information**

- a. If you break or lose an aligner, call our office immediately. Should the Aligner need to be replaced due to loss, you may incur a fee for the replacement Aligners
- b. Aligners must be worn in the right order and only on the dental arch indicated on the Aligners (U1 is your first upper aligner)
- c. Keep your current aligner in the blue case and your previous aligner in the red case (New blue, red dead!) Keep all your aligners previously worn in a bag – **do not throw them out**, we sometimes have to back up to previous aligners.
- d. Bring your current and previous aligner to all your office visits.
- e. Impressions may be necessary during or at the end of treatment. It is not an indication of something “wrong”, but simply the doctor’s way of making adjustments in the treatment.
- f. At the end of your first series of Aligners it may be necessary to wear another series of Refinement Aligners before the plan is completed.
- g. Lack of cooperation/Lack of Aligner wear can result in additional treatment fees to complete your treatment.
- h. If you lose an aligner, you must wear something to keep you teeth in from drifting. Call our office immediately for directions. If you are at the end of the 2 week period, you can move on to the next aligner. If you are not at the end of 2 weeks, you will have to go back to the last aligner and we will order a replacement aligner for the lost one. There is a fee from Align for the replacement aligner.

**Cleaning your aligners:**

- a. You can clean your aligners with your toothbrush and toothpaste or an electric toothbrush. Align sells Aligner Cleaning Crystals.
- b. Do not use denture cleaner that has any colored mouthwash in it. The aligners tend to absorb the color. Do not soak them in colored mouthwash.