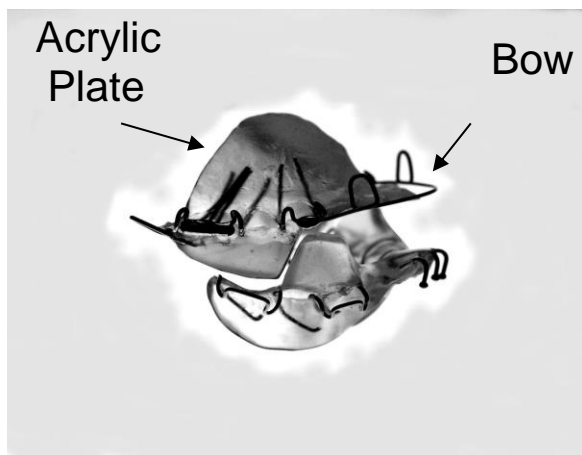


Functional Appliance Instructions

What do they do?

Functional (orthopaedic) appliances are used to treat patients in situations where the upper front teeth are prominent. But, only when the lower jaw (mandible) partly or wholly causes this prominence by being short.



How do they do it?

They work by producing a favourable environment for the lower jaw to grow in length. They do this by causing the lower jaw to be postured forward during appliance wear. Individual appliances will be designed to meet individual needs but many are based on the illustrated design. Occasionally it is necessary to wear headgear to augment the effect.

It is important to understand that this type of appliance is **very special** and does a job that no other type of appliance can perform. Its function is not only to straighten the teeth but also to enhance and improve the facial profile when compared to other techniques suitable for you as an individual.

The extent to which functional appliance treatment will be successful is most dependent on how well it is worn. This should be regarded as a positive feature as it allows the patient control over how long treatment will take.

Poor wear will make treatment take 3-4 times longer or even prevent treatment being successful at all! Treatment results are also affected by the genetic potential of jaw growth but even when this is not so great, good wear will still result in a favourable response.

What will I feel?

The 'Orthopaedic' appliance is very different and quite special in its aims and action. To start with it will also feel very different. Perhaps the most noticeable sensations are that:

It will feel a 'mouthful' when first fitted. You will lisp and perhaps produce more saliva at first. **Be reassured that these feelings will quickly wear off as long as you persevere over the first 7-10 days.** Avoid the temptation to keep taking the appliance in and out of the mouth or this will prevent your speech from settling as fast as it would otherwise do. Frequent excessive removal of the appliance also causes any tenderness of the teeth to take longer to settle.

Your lower jaw will feel that it is sticking out. This is because when wearing the brace the jaw is postured into a position that it is not used to. However, the position of the jaw is moved into is actually a more attractive position from a profile viewpoint **and you will actually look more natural with the appliance in place** once the facial muscles learn to relax. So, do not feel self-conscious and remember as far as your friends are concerned, from an appearance point of view, your brace looks quite ordinary when in the mouth.

You will initially be a little overwhelmed by the idea that you need to wear the appliance to eat with. This is for several reasons:

- Firstly, you are not biting 'tooth to tooth' with the brace in but rather with the plastic 'blocks'. This is a little disconcerting at first.

- Secondly, your lower jaw will be in a more forward position and it takes a while for you to co-ordinate your jaw movements in this position.
- Thirdly, your jaw muscles are not as strong with the jaw protruded.

Because of all of these considerations **it is very important that you choose easy meals to start with but keep the brace in.** Try soft food such as pasta, cottage pie, fish etc which do not need much chewing. Build up gradually over a period of days to firmer foods. As long as you do not try to 'run before you can walk' with eating, you will find that by the time you come back for your next adjustment appointment you will be managing any food you like – even steak if you wish!

We do not pretend that the first sensations with the appliance in may not be a little daunting. This is the same for everyone whom this type of treatment is selected. However, you must be patient. If you had a preliminary removable appliance before this one, you will have had all of these sensations before although to a lesser extent. You overcame these and you will overcome the sensations of your new brace – the main difference is that it may take a little longer and this is where patience is important. You need to know that if you persevere then you will settle with your brace in the near future. More than this you need to know that this appliance is unique in its action and its ability to improve not only the teeth but the jaw position – **so stick with it and you will benefit!**

There is one other potential sensation that may occur in a very few patients. As the brace settles in, you may experience some soreness on the inside of the lower half of the brace. If this develops and does not settle within a few days then please let us know as we will need to adjust the brace.