

# Orthodontic Temporary Anchorage Devices - (TADs)

It is possible that your orthodontic treatment may require a temporary anchor device or mini-implant screw to gain the best treatment outcome. This leaflet should answer the questions you may have.

## **What is the purpose of a TAD?**

A TAD (temporary anchorage device) is a miniature screw that is placed in the gum between the teeth. It is made from medical quality titanium alloy. TADs allow orthodontists to treat cases that were very difficult or nearly impossible before this technique. They are used as an extra anchor in the bone so that the brace can more easily move teeth into ideal positions.

## **I've never heard of TADs before, are they new?**

TADs have been used for many years and surgeons have used miniature screws for decades. Refinement of the design of the TAD has meant that they are now available for orthodontics.

## **How is a TAD positioned?**

The mini-screw can be placed at the start or anytime during brace treatment. The gum is "numbed" with local anaesthetic and the TAD is gently screwed into the bone near the teeth. The procedure takes only a few minutes to perform. The mini-screw can be used straight away to help the brace work.

## **Will it be painful?**

No, it is not painful. You will feel some slight pressure when the TAD is positioned. Once the numbness wears off occasionally patients say that there is a pressure sensation for a couple of days. Mild painkillers (your normal headache tablets) would help, but are usually not necessary.

## **How do I keep it clean?**

You need to gently brush around the TAD twice a day to remove plaque and food which can irritate the gum. A mouthwash is very helpful to ensure the area is kept as clean as possible. Do not use an electric toothbrush around the TAD itself.

## **What do I do if the TAD rubs against my lips/cheeks?**

You can place some wax over the attachment which will help to make it more comfortable. The lips and cheeks take a couple of weeks to get used to the TAD.

## **Is there anything I should look out for?**

It is normal for the TAD to feel a little bit loose. If you think that the TAD is very loose or the brace is dislodged, contact the practice to arrange to see an orthodontist so they can check it. In the unlikely event of increasing swelling or increasing pain, please contact the practice

## **How long will I need the TAD for?**

Normally the TAD is only necessary for a few months whilst the teeth are being moved into a better position. Your orthodontist will let you know how long it needs to stay in place.

## **Is it sore when the TAD is removed?**

No. Before the TAD is removed a “numbing” gel can be placed on the gum then the TAD is gently removed. It only takes a few seconds.



Xray of micro-screw implant in place in lower jaw

## **Are there other options if I do not wish to have a TAD?**

There may be other options that you can discuss with your orthodontist, but they may not achieve the desired best result.

## **Where can I get more information?**

The guidelines by NICE (National Institute for Health & Clinical Excellence) website can provide more information:  
[www.nice.org.uk/IP238](http://www.nice.org.uk/IP238)



Micro-screw in place above  
the upper front teeth