

ORTHODONTIC RECOMMENDATIONS

**INTENDED FOR PATIENTS UNDERGOING
ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT DURING
A PANDEMIC**

On March 15th 2020, Ontario orthodontists were shut down by the Public Health authorities. We received strict orders from the Royal College of Dentists of Ontario and the Public Health Authorities to treat NO patients unless they were encountering SERIOUS EMERGENCIES due to an **infection, severe pain or trauma** requiring immediate attention.

Only those patients presenting with the conditions listed above can be seen for an appointment. Please note that unglued or loose braces and retainers are almost never considered SERIOUS EMERGENCIES and therefore we cannot treat them now. However, if you have questions, please call us! We want to help.

Under the specific context of orthodontic treatment, we know that true orthodontic emergencies are exceedingly rare. If you have one of the conditions below please contact us immediately. After analyzing your condition, we will determine if an emergency appointment is possible (only under exceptional measures). Otherwise, and for all other conditions, you will be scheduled when we are allowed back to work.

- **Injuries to the cheeks, lips or tongue** causing severe pain, swelling or bleeding.
- **Broken or unglued appliances** creating significant discomfort and inhibiting normal mastication and/or that you cannot remove yourself.

We are so sorry for this inconvenience. We are simply following the authorities' directions. Once we know more, we will call you to reschedule. Whatever happens, we will not allow your/your child's health to suffer.

If you suspect that you have contracted or have the COVID-19 virus and that your condition requires an emergency appointment, please contact your local Public Health authority immediately. You will be informed about designated sites to receive your treatment in a secure fashion. To help you stabilize and relieve your present condition, with the help of the Quebec Association of Orthodontists, we have made available a guide describing the conditions that can present during orthodontic treatment and their associated solutions. Depending on the condition present in your mouth, most cases can be stabilized yourself (or by a parent) and are not considered orthodontic emergencies.

ORAL CONDITIONS THAT MAY BE ENCOUNTERED DURING ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT

What type of appliance are you wearing? Consult the appropriate section below that describes your situation.

- 1.REMOVABLE APPLIANCES (NOT GLUED)**
- 2.FIXED APPLIANCES (GLUED)**
- 3.ORTHODONTIC BRACES AND RELATED ACCESSORIES**
- 4.INVISALIGN**
- 5.RETAINER APPLIANCES**

1. REMOVABLE APPLIANCES (NOT GLUED)

Removable appliances are appliances that are not glued in place, we can insert them or remove them from the mouth.

Course of action for the best possible progression of your treatment during the temporary closure of your orthodontic clinic:

Continue to wear your removable appliance and respect the frequency recommended by us .

SITUATIONS:

1.1 Broken, deformed appliance (appliance no longer fits properly in your mouth)

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Contact us to obtain an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Contact us to inform us of your situation. We will likely wait for your next appointment after we return to work.

1.2 Lost Appliances

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Contact us to obtain an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Stop wearing the appliance until your next appointment after the pandemic

2. FIXED APPLIANCES (GLUED)

Course of action for the best possible progression of your treatment during the temporary closure of your orthodontic clinic:

- Continue to follow the usual recommendations (recommended foods and dental hygiene).
- If you are in the midst of wearing an active appliance (turning with key), please stop the activations prescribed by us.

SITUATIONS:

2.1 Separators between the teeth

Small elastics (colored blue, grey, or purple) inserted temporarily between the teeth.

These separators create the required space between the teeth to allow for the comfortable delivery of a new cemented appliance.

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Keep the separators in place until your appointment for the insertion of the appliance.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Using a pair of tweezers that has been disinfected, remove the separators by grabbing it from the portion above the tooth. If not possible, contact us.

IMPORTANT: if a separator is missing (you can no longer see it), it has either been swallowed or has made its way below the gums. If your child does not remember losing it or swallowing it, it is important to contact us. If it has travelled below the gum, the separator(s) may need to be removed.

2.2 Broken or partially uncemented appliances:

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Contact us to obtain an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

If the appliance does not inhibit chewing, keep it as is and wait for your next appointment. If the appliance is very sore or does not allow you to chew properly, please contact us. We will evaluate the situation and determine the necessity to plan an emergency appointment (exceptional measures)

IMPORTANT: if the appliance is partially glued and still present in the mouth, stop the activations if they have not yet been finished.

2.3 Appliance completely unglued

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

-Contact us to obtain an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

-Keep the appliance in a safe place and wait for your next appointment after we return to work. Do not forget to bring your appliance at that appointment.

IMPORTANT: do not attempt to put your appliance back into your mouth.

3. ORTHODONTIC BRACES AND ACCESSORIES

Course of action for the best possible progression of your treatment during the temporary closure of your orthodontic clinic:

Follow the most recent recommendations:

- If you wear elastics going from the top to the bottom teeth, continue to wear them as prescribed (same type of elastic and same position), but reduce the frequency to while you sleep only. Since the duration of the pandemic is unknown, it is important to only wear elastics at night.

SITUATIONS:

3.1 Long poking wire

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

- Cover the wire with orthodontic wax
- Attempt to bend the wire toward the tooth so that it is no longer facing the injured site.
- Attempt to cut the wire (the portion that is sticking out) with a nail cutter or a small plier (cuticle/nail cutter available in pharmacy)
- Contact us to obtain an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Attempt to stabilize the situation to be comfortable and wait for your next appointment after we return to work. In case of injury, swelling or bleeding please contact us. We will evaluate the situation and determine the necessity to plan an emergency appointment (exceptional measures).

3.2 Wire out of the bracket

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

- Cover the wire with orthodontic wax and call us.
- Attempt to push the wire back in with your fingers or even with the eraser at the end of a pencil. Cut the long wire segment as close as possible to the next brace.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Attempt to stabilize the situation to be comfortable and wait for your next appointment after we return to work. In case of injury, swelling or bleeding please contact us. We will evaluate the situation and determine the necessity to plan an emergency appointment (exceptional measures).

Note: orthodontic wax is usually sold in the pharmacy. If not, a bit of chewing gum will actually work well.

3.3 An unglued or lost brace

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Keep your brace if possible and contact us to schedule an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Keep your brace if possible and wait for your next appointment after we return to work. In case of injury, swelling or bleeding please contact us. S/he will evaluate the situation and will determine the necessity to plan an emergency appointment (exceptional measures).

3.4 Unglued bracket that stays attached to the wire

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Mobilize it by covering it with wax.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Attempt to stabilize the situation to be comfortable and wait for your next appointment after we return to work. In case of injury, swelling or bleeding please contact us. S/he will evaluate the situation and will determine the necessity to plan an emergency appointment (exceptional measures).

3.5 Unglued brace used for elastic wear

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Stop wearing that elastic as well as any others. Contact us to obtain an appointment..

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Stop wearing all elastics until next appointment after the pandemic

3.6 Lost or broken ligatures

Ligatures (metal or elastic ties) are fixed and serve to hold the wires in the braces. They can sometimes detach or undo.

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Elastic ligature: if you have saved it, put it back using tweezers that have been disinfected.

Metallic ligature: cut the portion that is sticking out with a small plier. In case it is scraping, that portion can be bent on itself (towards the tooth) using the back of the eraser of a led pencil.

Contact us to schedule an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Stabilize the situation utilizing the above methods. Wait for your next scheduled appointment with us after we return to work.

3.7 Broken or undone elastic chains

(They consist of links and cover each brace and to keep your teeth together.)

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Cut or remove the extra segment that is in the way.

Contact us to schedule an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Cut or remove the extra segment that is in the way. Wait for your next scheduled appointment with us after we return to work.

3.8 Springs fixed in place on the side of the teeth (example: Forsus)

Metallic springs that correct a bite where the top teeth are forward of the bottom teeth.

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

If the 2 parts are detached one from the other, it is possible to reinsert the rod (thinner portion) into the spring (thicker portion) by opening the mouth to a maximum and compressing the spring for it to be shortened.

If this procedure is too difficult, stabilize each part. Attach the upper part (spring) along the teeth and orthodontic wire using dental floss around the wire. Do the same for the lower portion (rod). This procedure applies as well for springs that are only one piece.

Contact us to schedule an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Stabilize the situation using the methods mentioned above. Wait for your next scheduled appointment with us after we return to work. Call us if you have questions.

4. INVISALIGN

- Continue to wear the trays and change them as frequently as prescribed.
- Once you have reached your last prescribed or available tray, complete the wear of that tray, then reduce the wear to 8 hours per day.
- Continue to wear your elastics as prescribed (same type of elastic, same position, but reduce the frequency to 8 hours per day).

SITUATIONS:

4.1 I no longer have any new trays

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Contact us to schedule an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Continue to wear your last active tray until your next appointment and reduce the time to 8 hours a day. It is very important, actually, essential to not stop wearing your trays. Your last tray acts as a retainer appliance for the actual position of your teeth. Please make sure to keep your previous trays in case of breakage or loss of your present trays. Wait for your next scheduled appointment with us after we return to work.

4.2 I was supposed to give me a new series of trays at my next appointment

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Your new series of trays, as well as the indicated clinical procedures related to the delivery of your trays, will be given to you at your regular appointment.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Since your next appointment is cancelled due to the pandemic, it will be likely be impossible to give you your next series of trays. Note that it is forbidden according to our Code of Ethics to give you your new trays or to get them to you since this act is inherently part of a regular appointment with us. The Royal College of Dentists of Ontario was clear that there would be no exceptions during this pandemic period.

4.3 I lost or broke my present tray

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Contact us to inform you of the next step.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Continue your treatment with your next tray but double the time prescribed by us. If you do not have the next tray, go to the previous one.

4.4 I have lost an attachment

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Contact us to inform you of the next step.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Continue to wear your trays until your next appointment after we return to work.

4.5 I have lost a button that is used to attach an elastic

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

Stop wearing the elastic as well as any others.

Contact us to schedule an appointment as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Stop wearing all elastics until your next appointment after the pandemic.

5. RETAINER APPLIANCES

Appliances placed by your orthodontist at the end of your treatment. These appliances assure the stability of your results, which means that your teeth should not move after treatment.

There are many types of retention appliances and they are often used in combination. These are the most commonly used: wires glued behind the teeth, removable acrylic retainers (which usually have a metal wire surrounding the front teeth), as well as clear (Invisalign-style) removable trays worn at night.

5.1. Unglued wire behind the teeth (partially or completely)

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

If the wire bothers you, contact us to schedule an appointment as soon as possible. In the meantime, apply orthodontic wax on the portion of the wire that is irritating you.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

Apply orthodontic wax to the area of the wire that is bothering you and try to stabilize your situation.

In case of major injuries or severe irritation to the gums or tongue, contact us. Your condition will be evaluated and a decision regarding the need for an emergency appointment will be evaluated (exceptional measures).

5.2. Broken or lost removable retainer

WHAT TO DO?

Normal conditions:

When you have lost or broken your removable retainer (palatal acrylic coverage, clear tray), contact us as soon as possible.

Pandemic COVID-19 conditions:

When you have lost or broken your removable retainers (palatal acrylic coverage, clear tray), we will schedule an appointment for you after we return to work.

