

So you're getting a removable or Twinblock brace

At this stage you should be aware of what the plan is! Richard will have met with you to discuss the options and outline the suggested changes and will have confirmed the plan with your normal general dentist.

All the evidence we have about Twinblock braces suggest they make changes with a combination of tooth tipping and subtle changes to the bones (potentially guiding any growth which is ongoing). The top and bottom parts of the brace make you bite your bottom jaw further forward to allow these changes to occur.

Just to recap – there are things we know about your braces:

- They are not sore to have fitted but they will feel pretty strange.
- Over the first day you may feel a bit drooly. Your brain will think the brace is food and will try to help you eat it by producing extra spit for lubrication. After a day or so your brain gets the message and turns off the tap.
- To make the brace active you need to bite forward into the blocks and try to get your lips to come together. This can give you an ache in the muscles of your cheeks or jaw joint for a couple of days. We recommend you take regular painkillers (whatever you would take for a headache – following the specific guidance on the pack) and have a soft diet (soups, mashed potato, rice, pasta, noodles etc).
- The brace takes up some of the room your tongue usually uses to make certain sounds and words. As a result, when the braces are initially fitted you will hear yourself talk with a lisp. This is the thing that takes the longest to get back to normal (2-4 weeks). Our best advice is talk as much as you can – read out loud, talk out loud and sing out loud. This will give you the practice to improve your confidence with your speech.

All these things are best dealt with by keeping the brace in and allowing your mouth to get used to it. If the brace is constantly taken in and out, you never get over the initial teething problems and things remain troublesome.

We will expect things of you as well! This is a team effort and both sides need to be pulling their weight.

- We expect sparkly clean teeth and a sparkly clean brace! This means spending enough time cleaning them every morning and night and after your meals with a normal toothbrush (manual or electric). If food and plaque are left around the teeth and gums acid is produced which can dissolve the surface of your tooth and cause marks (white or brown) – a process called demineralisation. Once these marks are there they cannot be removed and so preventing them from happening in the first place is the key! As we will only be seeing you every 2 months you need to be the quality check at home to ensure everything is as clean as it should be. Some people find disclosing tablet useful to help them see where plaque is living on their teeth. These tablets can be chewed up either before brushing or after brushing and will stain any plaque bright pink/ purple. One tip: don't use them just before

you go out as they will stain your tongue as well! The brace is best cleaned over a bowl of water (to cushion it if dropped) with a separate toothbrush and toothpaste. All debris should be removed by scrubbing both sides – taking care not to damage the wire work. If the brace needs an extra clean – it can be soaked in a dilute concentration of Milton for babies bottle (cold sterilisation) for the allotted 10-15 minute period.

- We expect you to look after the brace and make sure it is not being broken. Twinblock braces are designed to be worn all the time. However, they should be taken out for cleaning, contact sports and some meals. If they are removed from your mouth they need to be stored safely in the box provided and not put directly into pockets or in tissues. Whilst they are incredibly strong in your mouth they will break if dropped, sat on or thrown away.
- We expect to see you for your arranged appointments. Monitoring how the teeth are moving is a really important part of brace treatment. We understand that life is busy and that things crop up but if we don't see you regularly the treatment can go off track lengthening the process and increasing the chances of damage being done to the teeth.

Twinblock braces usually take about 12 months to create the desired change when worn well. Within this there is usually a period of time where we start to reduce the wear of the brace. Quite often Twinblock treatment will be followed by fixed braces to get the teeth as straight as possible. When making these decisions your orthodontist will often talk to you about whether teeth need to be removed for the best result.

