



## Post-Operative Instructions: Pediatric Space Maintainer

Please adhere to the following instructions to expedite your child's healing process and avoid any unnecessary discomfort:

### Adjusting to the Space Maintainer

- **Initial Adjustment:** It may take a few days for your child to get used to having the space maintainer in their mouth. This appliance acts as a space holder, allowing the adult tooth to come in easily and in the correct position. Without the space maintainer, adjacent teeth could collapse into the space and prevent the adult tooth from emerging properly.

### Dietary Guidelines

- **Avoid Sticky, Chewy, or Hard Foods:** Do not allow your child to eat hard candies, chewing gum, fruit snacks, caramels, taffy, or other sticky foods, as these can dislodge the space maintainer. Encourage them to chew on the other side, especially for the first 24 hours, as the cement can take time to fully set, and their tooth and surrounding gums may be sensitive.

### Handling the Space Maintainer

- **Avoid Fiddling:** Discourage your child from pushing the space maintainer with their tongue or picking at the wires and bands with their fingers, as this can loosen, deform, or dislodge the appliance.
- **Loose or Dislodged Maintainer:** If the space maintainer comes loose or comes off, remove it from your child's mouth and call our office immediately. Bring the space maintainer to your child's appointment so it can be recemented if possible.

### Post-Procedure Sensitivity

- **Sensitivity and Swelling:** Your child's tooth/teeth may feel sensitive, and the surrounding gums may appear red or slightly swollen, but this is normal and should subside over the next few days. If the pain is severe or your child is unable to eat or bite down on the tooth/teeth after 24-48 hours, please call our office.

### Pain Management

- **Medication:** To reduce pain or soreness, your child can take Children's Tylenol or Children's Motrin as directed on the manufacturer label, unless they are allergic or have been instructed otherwise.



## Oral Hygiene

- **Brushing and Flossing:** It is crucial that your child maintains good oral hygiene, as space maintainers can make brushing and flossing more challenging. Ensure they brush and floss daily, paying extra attention to the appliance to remove any food particles. For the first 24 hours, be gentle on the gums around the space maintainer if they are irritated.

## Regular Check-Ups

- **Routine Appointments:** Continue your routine 6-month check-ups and cleanings for your child. These appointments are important for maintaining oral health and for the doctor to monitor the progress of the adult teeth and determine when the appliance needs to be removed.

## When to Call Our Office

Please call our office if:

- The space maintainer comes loose or comes off. Be sure to bring the space maintainer to your child's appointment so it can be recemented if possible.
- The pain is severe or your child is unable to eat or bite down on the tooth/teeth after 24-48 hours.
- You notice your child's adult tooth coming into place in the area of the space maintainer.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please reach out to our office. We are here to support your child's recovery and ensure they have the information needed for effective healing.