

SPACERS

Description

The elastic separators that we use resemble small rubber/ plastic rings.

Purpose

Separators, also referred to as spacers, help make space between the back teeth. Normally teeth contact each other very tightly. We will need some extra space between your back molars so that bands can be sized and fitted easily within the next several weeks.

Care

It is important that the separators stay in. Please do not pick at them with your fingers or tooth picks- they may fall out! Sticky foods also pull separators out. Therefore, please avoid sticky foods such as gum, caramel, taffy, fruit rollups, etc.

Discomfort

Since the spacers actually cause the teeth to move slightly, there is likely to be some soreness. This may occur within a few hours and can last from several days to a week. If necessary, Tylenol or Motrin can be taken to relieve the minor discomfort. It is also helpful to rinse with ½ teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water before each meal.

Cleaning

Be sure to continue brushing as usual but you will need to avoid flossing between your teeth that have separators or they may come out.

Maintenance

Check the separators daily to be sure they are still in between the teeth. Call the office immediately if they are missing, they may need to be replaced depending on when they fell out and when you are coming in for your appointment.

Additional instructions for Separators

1. Separators may make the teeth sore. A non-aspirin pain reliever (e.g. Tylenol, Advil, etc.) will help relieve the soreness.
2. Do not eat anything sticky or chewy with the separators in place.
3. Do not pick at the separators.
4. Brush the teeth around the separators as well or better than usual.
5. Do not floss in the areas where the separators have been placed.

Please note:

- If a separator falls out a day or two after it is placed, call the office and schedule to have it replaced.
- If a separator falls out a day or two before the next scheduled appointment, it does not have to be replaced. It means that it has done its job and created enough space for a metal band to be fit around the tooth.
- If the long appointment scheduled after the separator appointment needs to be cancelled, the separator should be removed and replaced before the rescheduled long appointment.
- Separators should never be in place for longer than 14 days.