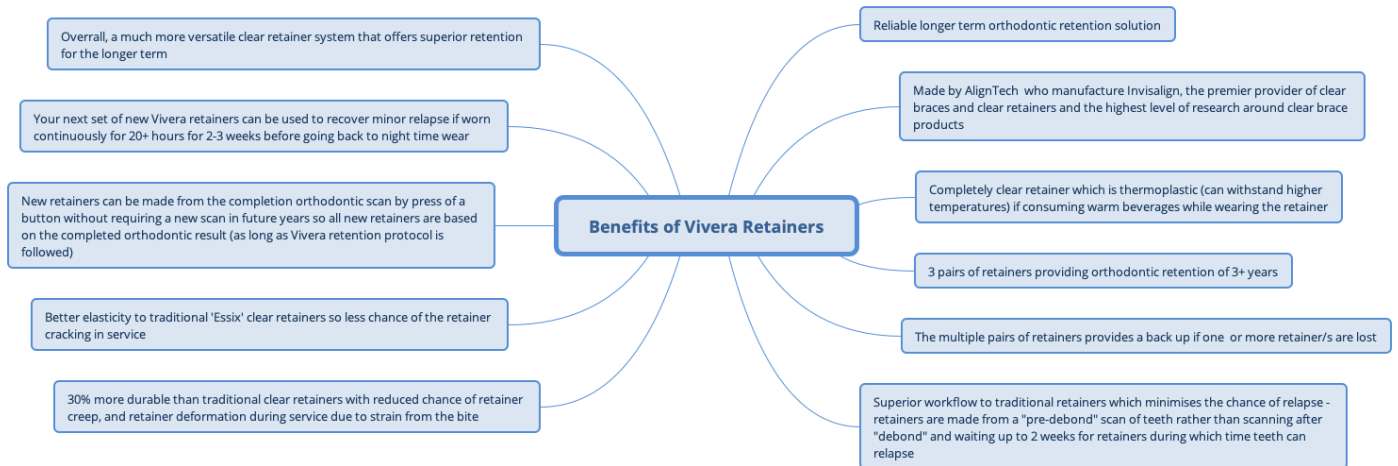


ADG Treatment Guide: Consent to Provision of Vivera™ Retainers



Why do we need a period of “supervised retention” with a religiously worn orthodontic retainer?

Orthodontic treatment is meticulously planned and executed over several years. Much effort is undertaken on the part of the clinician and the patient to ensure a perfect or near perfect bite is achieved. Tremendous patience is required on everyone’s part to achieve the optimum result and the wait is usually worth it.

When a brace is removed the tissues have not fully settled - there is a measure of inflammation and the mineralisation of bone around the roots is consolidating. At this time the teeth are prone to movement and drifting. It is therefore vitally important that the patient co-operates with a period of “supervised retention”. This is where the patient will wear an orthodontic retainer at night religiously to hold the teeth in their current position while the tissues stabilise.

This retainer usually takes the form of a full coverage ‘slip’ that fits tightly and snugly over the teeth.

How important is an orthodontic retainer and what is ‘orthodontic relapse’?

If you don’t wear your orthodontic retainer, your teeth will move, and this is called ‘relapse’. Due to the natural elasticity and play in some retainers, teeth alignment can relapse slightly even when a retainer is worn religiously. Neither you the patient, nor the orthodontist wants to see your teeth relapse, especially after all the hard work to move your teeth into optimum positions. It makes complete sense to choose and invest in the best orthodontic retainer system that is correct for you (advised by your orthodontist) and to commit to wearing the retainers at night religiously for as long as the orthodontist recommends. It is true to say that teeth move slightly throughout life so the only way to ensure straight teeth for life is to wear a suitable retainer at night for life.

How long should the period of “supervised retention” be?

That depends on what degree of bite correction which has occurred and the orthodontist’s opinion as to how long you need to wear your retainer for. In the UK most orthodontists recommend that the “supervised retention” period should be a period of approximately one year with the retainer being worn only at night. On the continent and the USA, there is a stronger orthodontic protocol for long term wear of retainers and a culture of wearing an orthodontic retainer for life.

In the orthodontic world, there is a motto – “You should wear an orthodontic retainer for as long as you want straight teeth!”.

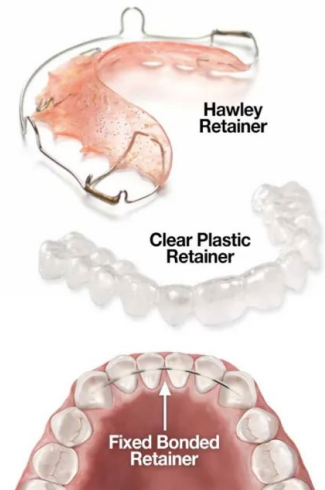
We recommend life-time wear of orthodontic retainers, or at the very least wear of retainers for several years after orthodontic treatment has culminated to minimise the potential for relapse which will usually incur significant charges to correct again.

What types of orthodontic retainer are there?

There are several types of orthodontic retainer that are provided after braces. Your orthodontist will recommend the best possible retainer solution:

1. **Hawley™** retainer (a plate with wires)
2. **Begg™** retainer (similar to a Hawley retainer)
3. **Essix™** retainers (clear plastic)
4. **Vivera™** retainers (clear plastic)
5. **Bonded** retainer (wire stuck onto the backs of the teeth)

The most common standard retainer solution is a clear plastic retainer of the Essix™ or Vivera™ type. These are called ‘full-coverage’ retainers because they fully cover over the bite, and they are suitable when the bite is settled after the active orthodontic phase.



We will go on to explain the differences between these two standard retainer systems and this will help you appreciate why the Vivera™ retainer system offers additional benefits to the other retainer systems if your teeth are in their final positions and do not require ‘settling’ of the bite which is when the other non-full coverage retainer systems described may be more suitable.

The choice between ‘Essix™’ retainers and ‘Vivera™ retainers’

Essix™ clear plastic retainers are economic to fabricate, and these are usually included as a no-cost item in most orthodontic plans. Vivera™ retainers are made by Align Tech™, the company who manufactures the Invisalign brace, and these advanced retainers will be charged separately to your orthodontic plan.

Your orthodontic plan will usually include one pair of ‘Essix™ retainers’. When your teeth are debonded and polished, the clinician will either take a physical mould, or scan your teeth to fabricate an electronic mould. This electronic mould is converted to a physical mould in the

laboratory. Your Essix™ retainer is made on this model and is usually dispatched to you within 1-2 weeks. During this wait period, there is the potential for a little relapse of teeth positions.

This Essix™ retainer is to be worn routinely at night. This material undergoes hardening over the year and usually deforms slightly ('strain deformation'). The lack of flexibility renders this material more prone to crack in service. There is a small element of 'creep' due to the hardening and this can result in small changes to the alignment of teeth over the year.

When patients return for repeat Essix™ retainers there is a need to take impressions or a scan again before new retainers are made. As a result, new retainers are made on a progressively deteriorating alignment of teeth which is not ideal.

The Vivera™ retainer strategy is a more water-tight process to prevent relapse and in our experience the Vivera™ material performs better in service and in our view is the preferred retention system.

The Vivera™ Retention strategy

When you are ready to have your brace removed and you opt for Vivera™ retainers, the jaws are scanned **before** your braces are taken off to manufacture your Vivera™ retainers. Sophisticated AlignTech™ (Invisalign) software electronically erases the brace and this allows AlignTech™ to manufacture your retainers as if the brace had already been removed. When you return to have your brace removed and your teeth polished, the Vivera™ retainers are available and supplied immediately after the brace debond. There is therefore no opportunity for your teeth positions to relapse due to a wait.

Vivera™ retainers are supplied in packs of 3 pairs. This is very sensible as we are prone to misplace and break retainers. Should you lose a retainer, there is no wait to see a dentist/orthodontist and have a rescan during which time your teeth can relapse. You can simply open another pack that you have retained in a safe place to ensure your orthodontic retention is not compromised. Each pair of Vivera™ retainers will last 12-14 months, meaning that the 3 pairs will provide you with 3 to 3 ½ years of orthodontic retention. After exhausting one pair of retainers, you will move to the next pair. Any difficulty in placing these will indicate some minor relapse because of 'strain deformation' of the Vivera™ retainers. In these circumstances you can insert the next pair of Vivera™ retainers to wear continuously (circa 20 + hours per day) for 2 weeks to recover and reset the teeth to the original alignment before moving to night-time wear once again.

As part of our belief that you should consider life-long retention, we strongly recommend that you inform us when you are wearing your last pair of Vivera™ retainers. As long as these continue to fit well, we can rely on the accuracy of your original orthodontic scan of your teeth (at debond) and can fabricate another 3 pairs of Vivera™ retainers without needing to see you for moulds or a rescan. This retention strategy makes so much sense for those of you who wish to commit to enjoying longer term retention and straight teeth for life.

Additional benefits of Vivera™ retainers over Essix™ retainers

1. Vivera™ retainers are more flexible and thermoplastic making them more resistant to deformation by temperature and creep due to the pressure of the bite
2. Vivera™ retainers are more durable than Essix™ retainers, up to 30% more durable
3. Fabrication of Vivera™ retainers from a 'pre-debond' scan rather than a 'post-debond' scan minimises the potential for relapse while you are waiting for your retainers to be made
4. Possessing 3 pairs of retainers provides a 'back-up' if you lose/break your retainer
5. Having 3 pairs of retainers made from the same scan, using a material that has been optimised for moving teeth means that you can (usually) recover any relapse by 2-3 weeks continuous wear of your next set of Vivera™ retainers. This is not readily achievable with Essix™ retainers as these are less flexible and more rigid

Conclusion

We mentioned at the outset that achieving an optimum outcome in orthodontics is a pain staking process. Once you have achieved a successful outcome it makes sense to invest in the best retention system to preserve that outcome. Where recommended by your orthodontist, the Vivera™ retention strategy provides one of the most predictable and reliable methods to retain the completed bite and smile for years to come.

I confirm that I have read and understood the information contained within this guide, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions. I feel that I understand the risks, benefits and limitations of the procedures described, and I understand that no promises or guarantees of the proposed outcome can be made. By signing this form, I am providing my explicit consent to render necessary treatment to assist my dental condition.

Name of Patient _____

Date of Birth _____

Patient signature _____ Dated _____

Parent/Guardian/
Legal Representative _____ Dated _____