



## **About your Separators (Sometimes referred to as 'Spacers')**

Normally your teeth fit tightly together, one against the other. Before placing your braces, we may have to make space between your back teeth so the metal bands are more easily placed around those teeth. We do this by inserting separators (spacers) about one or two weeks before your longer appointment.

Little elastic modules, shaped like a small doughnut are a type of separator we use. They can be clear or blue colored. They are gently placed in between your teeth in a fashion similar to flossing. Once in place they gently move certain teeth slightly apart to allow us to accurately place bands at your next appointment.

After separators are in place, they may cause some temporary discomfort. This goes away in a few days. Your best relief will be from over-the-counter analgesics such as acetaminophen (Tylenol). Many patients also find relief from warm salt water rinses (1 teaspoon of salt in 8 oz. warm water swished one minute 3 to 4 times daily), and normal chewing with these teeth will speed your teeth to feeling normal again soon!

After a few days your teeth will feel comfortable again as they adjust to being slightly apart. That small space means your bands can be fitted easily and in the best place that aids your future correction. Occasionally patients say their back teeth feel a little loose or "squishy" at this point. This is a perfectly normal response from teeth that are being moved, and also may occur at other times during your treatment. If you ever have a concern about this, please speak with our staff.

### **Remember...**

- Avoid all sticky, gooey foods such as gum, caramels and taffy to prevent pulling out a separator too soon! If this happens, call the office and we might need to bring you back to place another separator
- If a separator falls out on its own and your appointment is in a few days, that simply means the space was made between the teeth. A call to the office would not be necessary.
- Brush your teeth after every meal and before bedtime...but don't floss where the separators are. Once they are removed at your next appointment, regular flossing between those teeth can resume.
- Continue seeing your family dentist twice a year for preventative dental checkups.