

Headgear

What is it?

Headgear is a piece of equipment that we use in addition to other types of brace.

It consists of a metal bow that attaches to a part of the brace that is in the mouth and another, fabric part that attaches to either the back of your head or neck. It is shown in the picture below

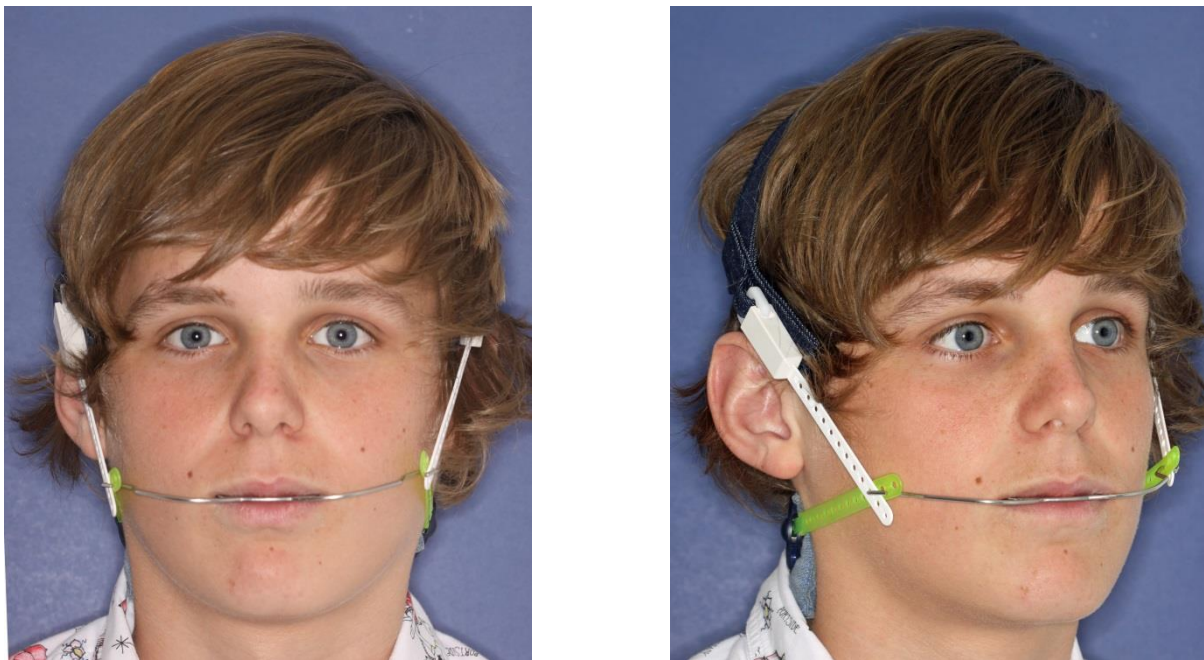


Figure 1: Headgear.

Why do I need it?

There are a number of reasons that we ask patients to wear headgear. The most common reason is to help us to make space to straighten up your teeth. If you do not wear your headgear well then we will not have enough space to straighten the teeth. If this happens it usually means that we will not be able to get an end result as good as we would hope.

When do I wear it?

When your headgear is fitted we will advise you on how much to wear it. However usually we will require you to wear it as much as possible. You will definitely need to wear it at night and in the evenings but you will not be asked to wear it when you are out and about.

How long will I wear it for?

This depends on your individual treatment. Sometimes you will only need to wear it for a few months, sometimes for most of your orthodontic treatment. However, as a general rule, if you wear it well then this will usually reduce the overall length of time it is required to be worn.

Is it safe?

Yes. There are lots of in-built safety features to prevent any harm to you when you are wearing the headgear. However, it is not a toy and should not be played with.

Will it hurt?

Some patients report that the back teeth ache when it is first worn. However, these teeth soon get used to having the headgear attached to them and that ache disappears quickly. The arms of the bow rest against the cheeks when sleeping. Again this can feel a little uncomfortable at first, but you will quickly get used to it.