

Northwest Orthodontics – Covid-19 information

Practice Arrangements

At the time of writing, the public health guidance we have all been given is to keep children off school and self-isolate as much as possible.

In line with this public guidance, we have taken the decision to **close the practice (except for emergencies) until further notice**. We aim to open again as soon as possible based on the public health advice we receive. This will be reviewed on a daily basis.

We understand this can be a worrying time for us all. So, with this in mind, we have prepared this Q&A sheet to answer some common questions which may arise.

Common Questions:

Why has the practice closed?

The practice has closed as we feel this is how best we can protect the staff and public during this challenging time. Also, it is possible our clinicians may be redeployed to other areas of the NHS to assist the fight against the virus and we want to be available to help.

Will you be open for emergencies?

Yes. We will be open for emergencies between the hours of 11 and 12 during our normal working days. If you have a problem with your retainer or part of your brace is causing pain or an inhalation risk, then contact us in the usual way. We can be contacted by phone from 10 am -12 pm, Monday – Friday and also by email. Please note that a broken bracket is not an emergency and can wait until the practice re-opens. For emergencies outside these specified hours, please contact 07704 079603. If you have had symptoms of the virus such as cough and/or fever and have a dental emergency, then please self-isolate and contact NHS 111 for advice.

Is the practice dangerous?

No. We have very high standards of cross infection control. The decision has been taken to conform to the social isolation advice given by the government and public health advisors.

How do I contact you?

If you have an emergency, you can contact us on our usual practice number **02871 369050**. We will be available by phone between 10am- 12 pm Monday -Friday. Please only call us if you have an emergency. Other enquiries are best submitted by e-mail info@northwestortho.co.uk. We will get back to you as soon as possible

What is a brace/retainer emergency?

If part of the brace is causing pain, or you are worried you may swallow or breathe it in, then please contact us. Another example would be a lost or broken retainer which no longer fits. If you are not sure, you can call us for advice. A broken/loose bracket which is still attached to the wire is not an emergency and can wait.

I've got a loose bracket, should I call you?

No, please see the previous answer.

When will you open again?

We don't know and it will depend on the public health advice we receive. We will contact you as soon as possible when we have this information available.

My appointment has been cancelled. When will I be seen?

We will be contacting patients with existing appointments to inform them of the cancellation. Unfortunately, we cannot make another appointment at this stage. We will contact you with a new appointment date as soon as we are fully re-open. Initially these appointments will be prioritised according to clinical need, so we thank you for your understanding in this matter.

What if the new appointment I've been given isn't convenient, what should I do?

You can contact us to rearrange this appointment once the practice is fully re-opened.

Won't this affect my brace treatment?

There will inevitably be a delay in the progress of your treatment. However, most appliances are safe and stable to leave for many months if a good standard of toothbrushing is well maintained. It is vital that patients maintain good oral hygiene and avoid hard or sugary foods. This is to prevent broken braces or damage to the teeth/gums. We will be posting advice on our website in the coming days – www.northwestortho.co.uk

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What about the elastics I'm wearing?

No - stop using the elastics until we see you again. This puts the brace in "park mode".

If you have been told by the clinician to monitor the front bite and you notice it getting worse, then contact the practice for advice. It would be helpful if you took a selfie of the bite and emailed it to us too.

My brace is removable. Should I still wear it?

Yes. You should continue wearing your removable brace as instructed but do not activate it any further.

If you have a two part removable functional brace i.e. on the upper and lower teeth, please wear it as normal unless your lower teeth are meeting the edges of your upper teeth when you close normally. In this case please stop wearing the brace and e-mail us a photo of your teeth closed together for further advice – info@northwestortho.co.uk.

I've been told to turn the key of my removable brace. Should I still do this?

NO - do not use the key to activate your brace.

What about my retainers?

It is VITAL that you keep wearing your retainers as you have been advised.

I've broken/lost my retainer what should I do?

You should call the practice for advice.

I was due to be seen for a first appointment. Will I go back on the waiting list?

No. Your appointment will simply be rearranged and prioritised accordingly.

I've had symptoms of the virus and am having brace/retainer problems. What should I do?

Do not come to the practice. Self-isolate and call NHS 111

I've had teeth out but no brace fitted. What should I do?

Please contact the practice ASAP for advice – some patients may have to attend the practice to have a removable brace made to hold the extractions spaces.

I'm due to have teeth out at my dentist, should I still go?

No do not have the teeth out – this can be re-arranged once the treatment can be started.

My dentist won't take my teeth out like you asked. What should I do?

Take your dentist's advice and do not have the teeth out. We can always rearrange appointments to fit around this.

I was due to have my brace off. Do I have to wait?

Yes. We know this is very disappointing, but we feel this is in the best health interests of staff, patients and public alike. If you have special concerns, please e-mail the practice.

I've finished self-isolation. Can I come in?

No. Until we have more advice, if you have an emergency please contact NHS 111.

I'm a private patient and have taken out finance. What now?

You will still receive your treatment as promised. This delay is temporary and for public health reasons. If you wish to delay payments to the finance company, you should contact them directly. Unfortunately, we cannot give financial advice.

When will this all end?

We don't know and it could be some time before we go "back to normal". We will be acting on expert advice as it comes available and will contact our patients accordingly.

We appreciate that this is frustrating for everyone, but we are acting in good faith for the protection of us all. We are all in this together and the priority is for everyone to stay safe during this challenging time. Thank you for your support.

Best wishes,