



**SCHWARTZ, ONG & SHEARER**

**ORTHODONTICS**

**NEWSLETTER**

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**Our orthodontic mouthguards (Total Gard: [www.totalgard.com](http://www.totalgard.com)) have proven to be successful for most patients playing active sports. Unlike the over-the-counter products, these do not require boiling to fit and they provide coverage for both upper and lower teeth. The main problem with the standard boil-n-fit or custom-made mouthguards is that they fit comfortably over braces and, as teeth move due to orthodontic treatment, the traditional mouthguards have to be re-fitted or remade. The Total Gard fits easily over all braces and appliances, e.g. expanders. They are also latex-free for patients with allergies. Some patients who are having difficulties with speech due to the 'bulkiness' of the double coverage, have cut away the lower portion and have found good retention for the upper teeth. Please note that we do recommend a mouthguard for all patients participating in contact team sports.**

### **Orthodontic Records**

#### **(Plaster Casts & Photographs)**

Many patients who have completed braces have asked for their original plaster casts and/or photographs to have as a memento of their orthodontic treatment. We are required by Victorian Health Department regulations to retain patient records for 10 years following completion of treatment in the case of adult patients.

For patients who have completed treatment prior to the age of 18 (i.e. 'minors'), all records must be kept until the patient reaches 25 years of age!! As you can imagine, we do end up with a major storage problem as the plaster models do take-up a lot of space. We have compactus units in each surgery filled with study casts and Dr. Schwartz & Shearer also have a collection at home!!

Holograms and other types of 3-D imaging are currently being tested in many universities as a possible means of archiving ... of course, this may eventually mean the end of impression-taking for fabricating our Study Models.

Since 2004, we have been using digital cameras for facial and intra-oral photographs of all cases. As you know, "Before & After" photographs are taken for each individual case. Patients that would like a copy of these can have them printed, sent via e-mail or "burnt" onto CD/DVD.

### **Toothbrush & Toothpaste Guidelines**

Patients and parents commonly ask us to recommend a specific toothbrush for use with braces. There is, in fact, no one brand that is better as long as it has the following features :

(a) Small head - for getting easily around back teeth and the tongue-side of the front teeth.

(b) Soft bristles - to prevent gum damage. Light strokes will stop a shaggy dog appearance, however, a new brush every three (3) months is recommended.

Electric toothbrushes provide these features; however the heads do have to be changed more frequently with braces. As a general rule-of-thumb, a minimum of 2 minutes brushing is required with braces to ensure a proper job. Again, no one brand of toothpaste is preferred, however it should contain fluoride to prevent decalcification (White Spots) around the braces. Together with our recommended weekly fluoride mouthrinse, there are no excuses for

### **Payment of Accounts**

A kindly reminder that payment of the quarterly accounts is requested within 14 days of the date of issue. When forwarding a cheque in the mail for payment of an account, it would be most appreciated if you could write the name of the patient on the reverse side of the cheque. If you have a problem in paying an account, please contact our Office Managers, Peter or Pauline on 9434-4111.