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### Temporary Anchorage Devices (TADs)

#### What are TADs?

TADs are mini or micro anchorage devices (also called mini-screws or mini implants). They are small titanium screws which are inserted in the gums under local anaesthetic as anchorage points for braces. They are well established in orthodontics and are usually used for several months but not for the whole duration of the orthodontic treatment. They are generally placed close to the back teeth or in the roof of the mouth so are not usually seen when you talk or smile.

#### Why are they used?

TADs are an alternative to other options which are not always well tolerated, such as headgear or extraction of teeth. Sometimes we are able to move teeth with TADs which cannot be moved by any other means.

#### How are TADs used?

The TADs are connected to the braces by means of fine wires or tiny elastic bands. Additional x-rays are likely to be necessary before, and sometimes after, insertion of the TAD.

#### Is it painful?

Placement of a TAD usually takes less than 15 minutes. First a very small amount of local anaesthetic is placed into the gum area where the TAD will be inserted. This is the only time you should feel any discomfort and it lasts only a few seconds. The TAD is then inserted with a special tool. No discomfort should be felt at this stage. Removal of a TAD is easy and does not usually need local anaesthetic.

What can I expect after placement of the TAD? Some patients experience

discomfort for one or two days after placement but simple pain relief medication can be used to relieve this.

#### What are the risks?

Failure rates are around 10%. In the event of a TAD loosening, another one can be inserted in the same or a different location. Although unlikely, a TAD could make contact with the root of a tooth during placement or once teeth start to move. If this happens, the TAD would be withdrawn and inserted again in a different location. Rarely, a TAD may fracture and the remnant may need to be removed.

You should brush gently around the TAD with a manual toothbrush to avoid inflammation due to food debris and plaque.

Please call us on 01473 636991 during normal working hours, if you have any problems with your TAD. Out of hours 111.