

## Orthodontic Department

# Advice for Stopping Thumb or Finger Sucking

This leaflet has been written to help patients stop sucking their thumb or fingers.

### Why should I stop sucking my thumb?

- Your orthodontist has noticed that sucking your thumb/fingers has **affected the position** of your teeth
- Your teeth could improve simply by stopping now
- We may not be able to start your brace work until you have stopped.

### How can I stop sucking my thumb?

- With a bit of willpower most people are able to stop sucking their thumb/fingers during the day
- The hardest times are when you are tired or when you are going to sleep
- Reminder therapies can help for these times when you are not aware that you are doing it
- These make you aware that your thumb/fingers have sneaked into your mouth and remind you to take them out.

### What kind of reminder therapies are there?

- A **fabric sticking plaster on the thumb/fingers** - these are rough, taste bad and get very soggy when wet
- **Bitter tasting nail varnish** – this is sold to stop nail biting and can be bought from the chemist
- Sewing your pyjama sleeve up
- **Wearing** a glove or **sock** on your hand
- A **thumb guard** - online retailers stock these.



## How long will it take?

- These methods usually work within a few weeks
- It does take a lot of willpower but the end results are worth it.

## More Information



## Contact Numbers

We hope you have found this information useful, but if you have any questions or are worried about anything, please speak to the Orthodontic team:

**Orthodontic Department (Dorset County Hospital): 01305 2551747**

**Orthodontic Department (University Hospitals Dorset): 0300 019 4694**

## About this leaflet:

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If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email [patientinformation.leaflets@dchft.nhs.uk](mailto:patientinformation.leaflets@dchft.nhs.uk)



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