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D: I think you need some bridgework. This is a replacement of a tooth by a fixed metal framework. It usually involves crowning your teeth on either side of the space with the false tooth being welded on to the metal substructure. The whole of the bridge is usually covered by a facing of porcelain. There are two kinds of bridgework you can have. First, fixed-fixed bridges. These have to be treated with great care. They must never be abused. They must never be used for biting anything too hard or too sticky. And you must make sure that you have cleaned them extremely well. Then there is the adhesive bridge. These are basically held in place by bonded wings. The wings of the bridge which fit round the adjacent teeth are etched and we use a bonding technique to bond the bridge. They are not as robust as the fixed-fixed bridge, but the great advantage of them is that they don't require too much tooth destruction and in the right conditions they can be extremely effective. . . . I'm going to take an impression. I'm going to fill this tray up with a pink paste, which I will pop (-Br) (put) into the tray and then I'll put the tray over your teeth for a minute or two. Breathe through your nose normally, relax your cheeks, lips and tongue.

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D: OK Do come in. So, you're not very happy with the appearance of your teeth. You seem to think they're sticking out a bit. OK This is what we do when we have a problem like this. First of all, we'll take some impressions of your teeth, that means make some plaster models of them. We'll also take some X-rays and a couple of photographs and then we can study these carefully and eventually decide if you need any treatment. But we have to go through these initial planning stages. If we decide, or I should say, if you decide that you'd like to go ahead with some orthodontic treatment, straightening your teeth, then there are two types of braces or appliances that we can use. One is a fixed appliance; that's an appliance which stays in all the time. Nowadays we actually stick this, almost glue it, to your teeth, and that locks onto your teeth. Then we put wires between the teeth which can move or rotate the teeth in the way that we want. The other type of appliance that we use is called the removable appliance, and this is one that you can take in and out for cleaning. One very important point you have to remember with any appliance is you've got to keep your teeth clean. If it's a fixed appliance this is even more important, because you can't take it out to clean it, so you have to be very, very careful about brushing. Also the fixed appliance can rub against your cheeks or against your gums. In that case if that were to happen, I'll give you some soft red wax

which you can pack around the appliance, which sort of pads it and stops it from rubbing. OK Well, I think that's all you need to know for now. Let's go ahead and take the impressions. . . .

Now that you have had the brace fitted, you're going to have to be extra careful about cleaning your teeth. Your oral hygiene will have to be very good. Maybe your teeth will feel rather tender for a few days. This means that the brace is doing its job, and the teeth are beginning to move. The soreness will go away after a couple of days. I'm going to give you some of this red wax. If your gums or cheeks get sore just put some wax on the appliance where it is rubbing and it will act like a plaster to protect your mouth.

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- 1 Also known as tooth decay, it is the common cause of losing teeth, up to about the age of 55.
- 2 This is a disease affecting the gums which is caused by a build-up of plaque and bacteria around the neck of the tooth which, if not removed by the patient, forms tartar or calculus.
- 3 This is a concentration of mineral salts which irritates the gum causing an inflammatory response which results initially in gingivitis.
- 4 This is a reddening and swelling of the gums with bleeding. If it is not treated then it will cause further irritation which results in the bone surrounding the tooth being lost, which eventually will cause mobility and the tooth will be shed.
- 5 These usually require antibiotic therapy followed by scaling and root-planing if the tooth is to be saved.
- 6 The cause is not known /autoimmune disease/. The treatment is usually by prescriptions of either mouth wash, benzydamine hydrochloride /Difflam/, or Triamcinolone paste, which is an extremely strong steroid, extremely good for the treatment of this ulceration.