
During treatment with metal or ceramic braces, you will have to make some adjustments to lifestyle. We do everything we can to keep our patients happy during their orthodontic treatment, and there are 3 things that we ask our patients to do to keep themselves happy!

- 1. Brush and Floss!** This is so important! Brushing and flossing can mean the difference between a great orthodontic result and a poor one.
- 2. Keep Your Appointments!** It is very important to be seen on a regular scheduled basis. If not properly monitored, braces can have problems that can possibly cause you to have braces longer than expected.
- 3. Follow Instructions!** Following the dentist's instructions will allow you to keep your treatment time on schedule.

WHAT TO EAT

There are two things to be careful of when eating while in braces.

1. You do not want to stress your jaw because the force can damage the appliances or cause brackets to pop off. That means you should avoid foods that are crunchy or really chewy.
2. You do not want foods to sit in your appliances that cannot easily be removed with brushing and flossing. The food sitting in your braces can lead to tooth decay and other oral health issues. That means you should avoid sticky, gummy sweets.

More specifically, **things to avoid are chewing ice, popcorn, chips, nuts, apples, carrots, hard candy, bagels, tootsie rolls, licorice, skittles, now and later candy, caramel, chewing gum, taffy, corn on the cob, etc.** Note you can cut up apples and carrots or remove corn kernels off the cob with a knife before eating. As long as you're not stressing your jaw, you're okay.

DISCOMFORT

When you first get your braces on or after you have the wires tightened, your teeth may feel a little sore. This is normal and only temporary. After a few days, the soreness will go away. Until then, you can relieve the soreness by swishing warm salt water around your mouth a few times a day (1/2 tsp. salt per 8 oz. water). You can also take over-the-counter pain relief like aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil), or acetaminophen (Tylenol).

As your mouth gets used to the braces, the insides of your mouth may feel irritated at first. We will give you some dental wax to put over the braces. After a week or so, you probably won't need it anymore. Your teeth may also feel a little loose when in treatment. This is typical and nothing to worry about.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call our office: (918)266-6470

CLEANING YOUR TEETH

Cleaning your teeth will take a little more time, and we recommend that you do it after every meal or at least three times a day. Brush teeth with bristles pointing up or down into the spaces between the brackets and the teeth. Use additional aids to clean hard-to-reach places in your appliances. These include superfloss, floss threaders, go between brushes, and Water-piks to name a few. Exactly which tools to use will depend on the braces you have and your personal preferences. Ask us for recommendations.

LOOSE BRACKETS AND WIRES

Your brackets are affixed to your teeth with a special type of orthodontic glue, and like any glue, this bond can fail. If you find that a bracket has loosened or fallen off, call the office and we will schedule to get it fixed as soon as possible. Likewise, if a wire comes loose, let us know quickly so we can arrange a time for you to come in. Delays in treatment can happen if these problems are not addressed in a timely manner. Sometimes we may recommend that the issue be resolved during your next regularly scheduled visit.

PROTECTING YOUR BRACES

If you play sports, we highly recommend you wear a mouthguard. There are mouthguards to avoid if you're in braces and others that are well suited for people in orthodontics. Ask us for our recommendations.

RUBBER BANDS/ELASTICS

Rubber bands should be worn as instructed. Failure to wear these bands will result in compromised treatment outcomes or significant increases in treatment time.

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