

Friendly Dental Center
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR BRACES

We do everything we can to keep our patients happy during their orthodontic treatment, and there are things that we ask our patients to do to keep themselves happy!

- **BRUSHING:** You must brush three times a day after every meal. Use the soft brush to brush the gums as instructed. TAKE YOUR TIME! (5 min)
- **PROXY BRUSH:** You must use the proxy brush as much as your soft brush. Your proxy brush is intended to brush in between teeth and wires, etc., where your regular toothbrush cannot reach.
- **RINSE:** Use a fluoride rinse twice a day. Once in the morning and once at night.
- **WAX:** Is used to relieve you of discomfort or pain caused by a bracket making a sore, a wire sticking your cheek, etc.

Please note that first two weeks with your braces are your uncomfortable ones. You may take a minor pain reliever such as: Motrin, Tylenol, Advil, etc.

ORTHODONTIC DIET

Foods that cannot be cleaned off the braces may lead to discoloration and decay of your teeth, even though our braces are made of metal and ceramic they are fragile and are usually damaged by eating the wrong foods, thus taking us longer to finish your treatment.

ABSOLUTELY NO

GUM - Sugarless or otherwise

STICKY FOODS OR CANDY – Caramels, Candy Apples, Toffee, Sugar Babies, Tootsie Rolls, Starbursts, Licorice, Gummie Bears.

HARD FOODS – Nuts, Apples, Popcorn, Hard Candies, Corn on the cob, Ice, Carrots unless cooked or Cut Into Small Pieces, Chips, Seeds.

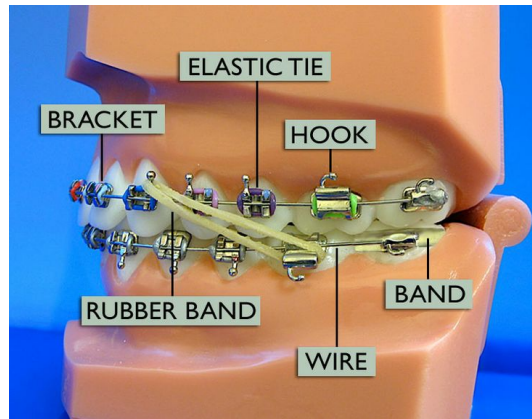
Be careful what you eat. Sugar is very sticky and it may cause your braces to come loose. Overly hard foods like peanuts, raw carrots and certainly ice (never a good idea) and well as very sticky foods like fruit roll ups can bend and break wires and brackets, delaying progress. Be cautious and use good judgment.

MAINTAINING ORAL HYGIENE

One of the most important things for an individual with braces to do is to keep the braces and teeth as clean as possible. It is not easy and takes some extra time. If oral hygiene is not good the result can be permanent discoloration of the teeth, which is seen when the braces are removed. Cavities too can occur but this is less common. The discoloration occurs when the bacteria in the plaque (the white stuff that accumulates around the braces) suck out minerals from the surface of the tooth leaving a permanent white stain. In addition, not keeping the braces clean can cause a build-up of plaque that will result in swelling of the gums. **We recommend getting a cleaning every 3 months.**

You must get in the habit of brushing more frequently than usual. Dr. Parsaei or an assistant will introduce you to special little brushes that assist you in cleaning behind each wire and bracket.

GET TO KNOW YOUR BRACES



Occasionally wires can shift or bend causing a wire to poke you. Sometimes this is a sign of progress as the teeth move exposing more wire. Call the office and Dr. Parsei or one of the assistants will adjust the sharp edge for you. You will be given wax to apply to areas such as this. If a bracket comes loose please call the office promptly. This is not an emergency however Dr. Parsaei will want to replace the bracket as soon as convenient. Progress is slowed down without this bracket in place.

If you are asked to wear **rubber bands** it is in your best interest to follow instructions exactly. Not wearing the rubber bands or wearing them incorrectly delays the day when the braces can be removed.

Similarly if asked to wear a **retainer** or **removable appliance** follow the instructions carefully. After the braces are finished *retainer use is critical for long-term success*. Your teeth will have a high likelihood of drifting back in the direction they came from. Use of a retainer after braces may be a lifelong commitment or in other words use the retainer as long as you want your teeth to stay straight. Teeth can shift over time due to bone changes, muscle changes, bone growth, new fillings or crowns and in general the aging process. The importance of retainers after braces cannot be understated.

Loosening of teeth is to be expected throughout treatment. Don't worry! It's normal. Teeth must loosen first so they can be moved. The teeth will again become rigidly fixed in their new corrected positions.

Finally, braces can cause some soreness. This is common when a new wire is placed and usually goes away after a day or two. Eat soft things or whatever you can tolerate. Be patient. All the appointments and effort in orthodontics will have great and long lasting rewards: a more beautiful and healthy smile.

WILL THE BRACES CAUSE DISCOMFORT?

Initially the braces feel like they “stick out.” This is normal. As you become accustomed to your braces and tooth alignment improves, this sensation will cease to be a concern. Although the brackets are round and smooth, until the cheek tissues have “toughened,” you may find it helpful to use a small piece of wax around the bracket that is creating the irritation. If your supply of wax runs out, call our office for more. We also recommend rinsing with warm salt water three times a day.

You will probably notice some discomfort beginning a few hours after your braces are placed. Some teeth, usually the front teeth, may be “tender” and sensitive to pressure. Occasionally, patients report that they experience no discomfort, but most have some soreness beginning during the first eight hours and dissipating within the week. Exactly when the discomfort ceases is impossible to predict and differs with each patient. Nonprescription pain remedies are recommended for discomfort. For maximum effectiveness, it may be best to take such medications before the discomfort begins.

BEFORE LEAVING THE OFFICE

There are routine steps that we ask you to take prior to leaving the office. These steps will minimize discomfort related to irritation from the braces and ensure an optimal response to treatment. Please make these steps a part of each office visit:

- Using your finger and tongue, check that wire ends do not extend into areas which might poke or abrade the tongue or cheek.
- Make sure you understand what you are to do until your next appointment. This could include wearing elastics as instructed, activating an expander or following specific hygiene or diet instructions.
- Make sure you have an adequate supply of orthodontic wax, special cleaning aids, elastic bands or other related materials you may need between appointments.
- Always schedule your next appointment before leaving the office. Waiting 1-2 weeks after an appointment to schedule your next office visit complicates the scheduling process, since appointments are programmed 4 weeks in advance. Frequently damaged appliance and changing or cancelling appointments can LENGTHEN the treatment time.
- **Please let us know IN ADVANCE if one of your brackets or other related materials break/fall off so we can lengthen your appointment. BRACKETS WILL ONLY BE REPLACED IF WE ARE TOLD BEFOREHAND.**

Thank you for choosing us for your dental needs. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office at 973-465-8885.