

# Instructions for Patients Undergoing Orthodontic Treatment



Since everyone's teeth and jaws are unique, your treatment plan and the appliances you will be wearing will be unique just for you. Some appliances are **fixed**: They stay on throughout your treatment. Others are **removable**: It is up to you to wear them when you should. How long your treatment lasts depends on your orthodontic problem, your cooperation with wearing your appliances and whether you need other treatment as well.

After placement of your braces, discomfort usually comes from two areas:

**A. Teeth.** Sensitivity to pressure is quite common after the initial placement of your braces and after each orthodontic adjustment. The eating of soft foods during this initial adjustment period and the taking of Aspirin (Disprin) or Ibuprofen, (Nurofen) will usually be adequate to relieve this problem.

**B. Lips.** Your lips and the inside of your mouth are used to rubbing against very smooth teeth. With the placement of the orthodontic brackets, these areas may become tender. If the discomfort becomes too great you can place a piece of orthodontic wax over the brackets as instructed. This relieves the irritation of the lips, cheeks and tongue. It is recommended that you use orthodontic wax only when necessary. This will allow your lips to become more quickly adapted to the braces.

Braces create small ledges, nooks and crannies for food deposits, which can lead to cavities and gum problems. This makes brushing and flossing even more important while you are wearing braces. When you brush and floss, handle your appliances carefully so you will not break or loosen them. If a problem arises or a breakage occurs, contact our office for advice or an appointment to fix the appliances. Excess breakages can extend treatment time.

**Brushing:** Be sure to brush your teeth right after each meal and before you go to bed. It is best to use a fluoride toothpaste to help fight cavities. We may also prescribe a fluoride mouth rinse to help prevent cavities.

**Flossing:** Because your toothbrush will not reach between your teeth, brushing alone will not keep your teeth clean and healthy. Flossing can help. A floss threader, available from your dentist, hygienist or pharmacy, helps you floss with braces on.

Speak to our hygiene team to get the best information on how to brush and floss.

**Eating:** While you are wearing braces, you can eat almost all of your favourite foods. Just be careful with these four troublemakers: sticky food, hard food, crunchy food and sweets.



**Avoid sticky foods** (minties, toffees and caramels). These can bend or break your wires.  
**Cut hard foods** like apples and carrots into bite size pieces so you do not break your appliances.

**Avoid crunchy foods** like corn chips and nuts. Crunch bread into small pieces, especially really fresh crusty rolls. Avoid pork crackling and gnawing on meat bones. They can snap your wires.

**If you eat sweets** be sure to brush straight away. Eating fewer sweets helps fight cavities. Ice cream can cause the cement under the bands to crack - so only eat in moderation.

By offering years of training, experience and the latest technology your Dental Excellence professional can help you have a winning smile. You, too, are part of the team. You can help assure the life-long success of your treatment by taking good care of your appliances and by following your dentist's instructions carefully.

**A couple of reminders:**

1. Be sure to keep all of your appointments so you will not prolong treatment.
2. Be sure to wear your removable appliances and elastics as many hours as your dentist advises.
3. If an appliance breaks, call your dentist right away and bring any pieces to your next visit.

Again, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office. A winning smile will soon be yours!

"Smile...  
change your life"

