



**THE
ORTHODONTIC
PLACE**

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PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS AFTER BANDS ON

Congratulations! You have now begun your orthodontic treatment. Please review the following information.

GET TO KNOW YOUR BRACES



Archwires	Thin wires that form a track to guide the teeth
Brackets	Small squares attached next to each other that hold the teeth to the archwire. They can be metal or clear
Bands	Metal rings that go around the molars and act as an anchor for the archwire
Modules/ Elastic Ligature	Coloured tie elastics that fasten the archwire to the brackets
Elastic hooks	Where the rubber bands are used to connect the upper and lower braces. They apply pressure to help move teeth

BEFORE LEAVING THE OFFICE

There are routine steps that we ask that you complete prior to leaving the office. Please make these steps a part of each office visit:

- 1) Using your finger and tongue, check that wire ends do not poke or abrade the cheek or tongue.
- 2) Make sure you understand what you are to do until your next appointment. This could include wearing elastics as instructed, adjusting an expander or following specific hygiene or diet instructions.
- 3) Make sure you have an adequate supply of dental wax, special cleaning aids, rubber bands, or other related materials you may need between appointments.
- 4) Always schedule your next appointment before leaving the office. Waiting 1-2 weeks after an appointment before scheduling your next office visit complicates the scheduling process, since

appointments are usually programmed 6-8 weeks in advance. Postponing appointments is a common contributor to overtime treatment.

BRUSHING AND FLOSSING



One of the common concerns about orthodontics is that the braces might cause decay. Actually the parts of your teeth that are covered by your orthodontic bands are protected from decay as long as the cement under the bands is holding properly.

However, the bands do make certain places on your teeth harder to clean. The brackets, tubes, and wires that stick out away from the teeth tend to make a little shelf that may cause problems. Brushing is important at all times, but especially now that you have braces. Work hard to keep your braces just as shiny as the day they were placed. Then when your treatment is complete and your braces are removed you will be proud to smile.

Here are some suggestions that can help you know when and how to clean your teeth during orthodontic treatment.

- ★ Brush 3-4 times a day; after meals and snacks. Use soft toothbrush with a small head to reach your back teeth properly
- ★ Brush under, above, behind and around ALL surfaces of the teeth AND braces. Don't forget to brush inside and outside of top and bottom gums
- ★ An interdental toothbrush (looks like a Bottle brush) and floss are fantastic tools to clean under the archwire
- ★ Replace your toothbrush every two or three months, or sooner if the bristles are frayed. A worn toothbrush won't do a good job of cleaning your teeth.
- ★ Use additional mouthrinse or ToothMousse™ as directed by your orthodontist



Tip for brushing Put on your favorite song and brush to the length of the song (normally 2-3 minutes).

Remember, good brushers experience less soreness and have faster tooth movement because the gums are healthy. Inflammation (redness and swelling) in the gum tissue slows the rate of tooth movement and also looks unsightly. Poor brushing can result in permanent white spots and cavities on your teeth as well as bad breath. So, please brush and floss thoroughly and often!

Continue to visit your dentist regularly for professional cleanings and oral exams while undergoing your orthodontic treatment.

DIET TIPS

We do not want to interfere with your nutritional intake, but we do ask that you watch the types of foods you eat. Some types of foods are capable of breaking your bands or brackets or bending your wires. Eating the wrong foods usually damages the braces, which in turn prolongs treatment time.

Here is a list of foods that should not be eaten during your treatment: *CHEWING GUM, MOST LOLLIES, NUTS, CRUSTS, CROUTONS, HARD MUESLI BARS, AND AVOID BITING ON PENS, PENCILS AND FINGERNAILS.*

You may want to avoid biting into foods with your front teeth. Instead, cut, break or tear foods into small bite-sized pieces. Then use your back teeth to do the chewing. There are some foods you will need to eat differently during orthodontic treatment. Also try to eat less foods and drinks with sugar, i.e. ice cream, pastries, soda, etc. Here is a chart that will help you follow the proper eating techniques during your treatment:

FOOD	HOW TO EAT
Apples, peaches, pears (any hard fruits)	Cut into bite size pieces
Popcorn	Avoid
Corn on the Cob	Cut the corn off the cob
Chips, cookies and crackers	Break with your hands first into bite size pieces
Carrots & broccoli	Make sure they are cooked to the point where a fork will go into it easily; do not eat them when they are crunchy.
Meat on bones (ribs, legs, thighs)	Take meat off with a fork or your fingers. DO NOT EAT DIRECTLY OFF THE BONE!
Ice cubes	It is okay to have it in your beverage, but do not chew the ice cubes
Sweets and lollies	Do not have any hard and chewy lollies such as hard gummy lollies, Minties, Red Skins, Fantales, Zombie Chews
Sandwich, hamburger, hot dogs and pizza	Do not bite into any of these, instead tear or cut small portions and place into your mouth.



Sweet Foods and Drinks

Although they may not cause damage to your appliances, they do contribute to dental decay and unsightly white spots on the teeth. Care should be taken to brush your teeth immediately after eating very sweet foods. If you cannot brush right away, then rinse thoroughly with water. Soft drinks and sport drinks are full of sugar and acid. Limit having these to the minimum. Use a straw when you have to drink it and do not sip it continuously throughout the day.

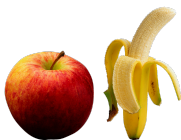
DIET IDEAS FOR SORE TEETH

As you may already know patients wearing braces or other appliances are liable to have some “tender teeth” for a day or two. Putting foods in a blender or cutting them up into smaller portions are good ways to make this time easier. Here are some suggestions to maintain comfort and nutrition.



Protein

- ★ Add cubes of cheddar cheese to soup.
- ★ Add melted cheese on soggy pasta dish
- ★ Cook a hamburger slowly over medium heat, break into pieces and stir often; try not to let it get too crispy.
- ★ Use a meat grinder, if you have one, for other meats. Add a little gravy, sauce, or salad dressing
- ★ Fritatas or quiches
- ★ Scrambled eggs



Fruits

- ★ Fruit juices
- ★ Frozen fruit juices
- ★ Fresh fruit smoothie
- ★ A banana in the blender leaves something to be desired, so add that to a milkshake.
- ★ Frequently it's uncomfortable to bite or chew something very cold, with all that metal around the teeth. So take fruit out of the refrigerator the night before, in order to have it at room temperature when it touches those sensitive teeth at breakfast.

Vegetables



- ★ Some cooked vegetables are easily eaten, but you may want to mash them up with a fork.
- ★ Salads are a real problem, chop ingredients up finely with a knife
- ★ Tomatoes, cauliflower, cooked squash, and mashed potatoes are easier to eat than other vegetables.

Dairy



The greatest softest foods ever invented. Milk: plain or flavored. Hot chocolate, milkshakes, soft cheese, yoghurt, sour cream and ice cream.



Lunches

We all know that whole wheat bread, bursting with those crunchy little kernels of grain are so nutritious. But just for a couple of days when eating hurts, break down and get some nice soft white or wheat bread; without kernels of grain. You may choose to stick to sandwich spreads rather than sandwich fillings.

- ★ Canned or plastic snack containers with gelatin, pudding, or soft fruits are a great invention.
- ★ Hot soup can be a lifesaver; place it in a thermos and put it in your lunch bag.
- ★ Avoid cold meats, hard cheese and anything that has to be chewed thoroughly.

EMERGENCY



There are very few true orthodontic emergencies. Most problems can be remedied at home. However, if you have a situation that you cannot resolve on your own, call us as soon as possible so that we can fit you in for a repair appointment.

Tooth and Cheek Pain

When you get your braces on, you may feel general soreness in your mouth and teeth may be tender to biting pressures for three to five days following the adjustment. The intensity and duration of discomfort will vary with each patient. This can be relieved by rinsing your mouth with warm salt water. Another option is to use the Brace Relief gel supplied in your Care Pack as a temporary covering to the affected area. If the tenderness is severe, take Panadol or Nurofen or whatever you normally take for headache or similar pain.

Brackets tend to irritate the inside of the cheeks for the first few weeks. Place dental wax that we supplied you on orthodontic appliances to protect the cheeks from sharp edges.

If there is discomfort eating, refer to [diet ideas for sore teeth page](#)

Allergic Symptoms

Although uncommon, allergies to brackets or other metal appliances and sometimes to latex gloves do occur. If allergic symptoms such as skin rash appear, please contact our office as soon as possible.

Lost Appliances

If you have misplaced your retainer or other removable appliance such as plate or blocks, please call our office soon to schedule an appointment for replacement of the appliance. If you wait for a long time to have a retainer replaced, your teeth may shift and you may need to have braces put back on.

Loose or Broken Parts

The braces and adhesive we use are very durable, but not unbreakable. The following techniques will explain how to make yourself comfortable until you can come back to the office for a repair. Some supplies you may find helpful are: tweezers, long nose pliers, nail clippers and small wire cutters.

If you have something loose or broken, please call us to set aside the necessary time for repair, **EVEN IF YOU HAVE AN APPOINTMENT THAT DAY.**

PROBLEM	SOLUTION
Loose bracket	If the bracket is not causing discomfort, leave it attached to the wire. If you are uncomfortable, cut the elastic tie holding the bracket on the wire and then remove the bracket.
Loose band	Chew on the opposite side and avoid sticky foods. Call the office for a repair appointment. If the band is completely off put it in an envelope and bring it to your next appointment.
Lost elastic tie or coloured 'module'	Notify us at next appointment if only one has fallen off. If more than one has fallen off, call in to make an appointment.
Loose wire	Try to place wire back in place with tweezers. If that is not possible, clip wire with fingernail clippers behind last tooth to which it is securely fastened.
Poking wire	Try to push sticking wire down with an eraser (supplied in the Care Pack). If wire is long enough you can try to clip the wire with fingernail clippers. Wax may also help to smooth the area.
Broken wire	Ring us to schedule a repair appointment
Broken plate or retainer	Ring us to schedule a repair appointment



Tips to use dental wax

Pinch off a small piece of dental wax, roll it in your fingers to soften it and to make it stickier, and place it onto the sharp area. If it doesn't stick easily, try to dry off the area as best as possible using a paper towel or cotton ball. Once the wax is on, you should continue to brush your teeth as usual, even with the wax on the bracket. If the wax comes off and you swallow it, do not worry. Wax is harmless and can be reapplied as often as necessary.