

CONGRATULATIONS!

Read the whole page please!

With your assistance and cooperation we finished placing your braces today! It will be a new and rewarding experience! This introductory page will give you a basic understanding and review of your responsibilities while in braces! You already know that to have successful orthodontic treatment depends upon your commitment to being a super orthodontic patient!

Foods to Eat or NOT to Eat?

We can't put braces on with super glue! Therefore, you must adopt modified eating habits during your orthodontic treatment. This is merely a guide... we can't list every food not to eat! Common sense will tell you what other items not listed should be avoided.

Bad News... these foods bend & break wires, loosen bands, and break off brackets... or are just plain unhealthy—

- * No gum— no exceptions!
- * No hard foods— do NOT eat: hard pizza crust, bagels, Peanut Brittle, nuts, popcorn, corn chips, Nacho chips, hard tacos, ice, peppermints, Lemonheads, Jolly Ranchers, etc.
- * Sugary foods and soda pop are sources of powerful sweets that create a favorable environment for decay.
- * “Stickies” like caramels, taffy, and Now & Laters.
- * Biting off food with your front teeth will break off braces.
- * Non-food objects like pens, pencils, finger nails, and ice are obviously NOT to be chewed on!

Good News!!!

- ~ Eat shavings of raw carrots made with a potato peeler.
- ~ Cut food into bite-sized pieces to put in your mouth.
- ~ Apples, French bread, bagels, subs, hot dogs, etc. must be cut into small pieces and placed on the back teeth for chewing.
- ~ Fun foods must be handled differently: cut the corn off the cob, remove meat from bones like ribs and chicken, and avoid eating the hard crust edges of pizza.
- ~ Eat Pringles soft potato chips instead!
- ~ Soft Chocolate like plain Hershey bars or Reese cups are okay.
- ~ Steamed or pressure cooked veggies are soft enough to be eaten and still retain their nutritional values.

Broken braces are a SERIOUS problem!

Every patient wants to finish orthodontics as soon as possible... yet the most serious delay is due to broken braces! Therefore, we educate you about the problem TWICE... very thoroughly at your treatment coordinator visit and then again when you get your braces on. In fairness to all, repairs CANNOT be done during regular hours. You WILL have to come in during school hours... another good incentive to follow your braces diet! After 3 braces are broken there is a charge of \$25 per brace to replace them— it is time consuming and costly!

If you break a brace, or wire, let us know immediately! If you wait until your regular appointment we won't be able to fix it. A broken brace is NOT an emergency, but we must know that it is broken so we can schedule your time consuming repair visit during school hours.

Length of Treatment

The length of your orthodontic treatment depends on: the severity of your problem, your cooperation, keeping appointments, and your body's response to orthodontic forces. My estimate is usually close to the real time spent in braces, but no one can precisely predict something so complex and variable as orthodontic therapy.

Possible Appliance Irritations

If any brace parts irritate your mouth, dry the area with a cotton ball or tissue and place a small piece of wax or cotton on the irritating object. This irritation disappears in a day or two. If a wire is poking you, try to bend it out of the way with the end of your toothbrush... you may even cut it with a durable nail cutter. If that doesn't work, dry the area around the “poking object” with a tissue and cover it with wax or cotton ball until you can come to the office.

Longer appointments for broken braces are scheduled in the morning or early afternoon. School appointments are unavoidable for these longer appointments. After school appointments are reserved for normal short appointments such as brace and appliance adjustments, retainer checks, and growth and development check ups. Not showing up for long or important appointments means you will lose your privilege of reserving one again at that time, or have to wait 2 months or longer for that next open time slot.

Oral Hygiene is really important!

You must be very strict about brushing your gums! Brush your gum line after every meal. NO brush? Then rinse VERY vigorously to dislodge food. To brush, use a circular or vibrating motion pushing the bristles gently, but right smack INTO the gum line and between the teeth for 10 seconds on each tooth. Brush 6 minutes EVERY night before bed! Floss at least twice a week to remove plaque and food debris not reached by brushing. Over the counter fluoride rinses offer extra protection from caries.

Adapting to Your Braces

As your teeth adapt to the braces, they may become sore when chewing foods— therefore, eat soft food and take Tylenol if necessary. The soft tissues inside your mouth, including cheeks, lips, and tongue, will toughen up after a few days. The temporary increase in pressure after each adjustment disappears in a few days. As you adapt to your braces, you will find fewer measures necessary to maintain your comfort, i.e., Tylenol or Advil, soft or liquid diet, etc. Call us if there is undue discomfort.

Appointment Rules are FIRM!

We are on time, proud that we function on time and expect you to be on time also! Your time is as valuable as ours— mutual respect for time is important. Please be prompt and do not change appointments on a whim. Late patients are seen at our convenience. If you must change an appointment, 24 hours notice is required to reschedule as a courtesy to us and other patients. We all have busy schedules to juggle— canceling because “you forgot” doesn't work. \$25 will be assessed to your account without proper notice. We don't disrupt our schedule to see late patients— they will have to wait for the next free time available.

BRACES and SPORTS... We know sports coaches insist on your attendance or pay the penalty of not playing! If you play sports— YOU must be the responsible person following your diet and schedule to avoid conflicts with orthodontic appointments and sports.

**The key to excellent orthodontic results is...
you and your level of commitment!**

Questions? Please do not hesitate to call me or my staff.

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