

Your orthodontic treatment represents an investment by you and/or your parents in your future oral health and well-being. It is important to realize that this information is designed to ensure the success of your orthodontic treatment. If you follow these instructions carefully, many of the common problems can be avoided.

HOW DO I TAKE CARE OF MY BRACES?

BRUSHING

Extra time is needed when brushing your teeth to make sure that all areas around the braces have been properly cleaned. Be sure to brush all surfaces of your teeth, your gums, and your tongue. The goal is to remove plaque from the teeth and gums. It is the bacteria in plaque that is responsible for inflamed gum tissue (gingivitis), permanent scarring of enamel (decalcification), and tooth decay. Brush your teeth immediately after eating any meal, snack, or drinking a sugary beverage. Always brush your teeth in the morning and at night. If you cannot brush at lunch, rinse your mouth out very thoroughly after eating.

Step 1:



Step 2:



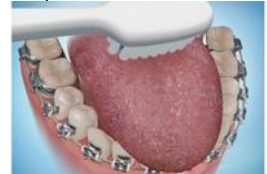
Step 3:



Step 4:



Step 5:



Specialized brush tips, called interproximal brushes, are available to help get between the braces and under the wires.

Interproximal Brush



FLOSSING

Extra time will also be needed when flossing your teeth. Floss-threaders and Superfloss can be used to help pass floss under archwires to facilitate flossing of the teeth.

Step 1:



Step 2:



Step 3:



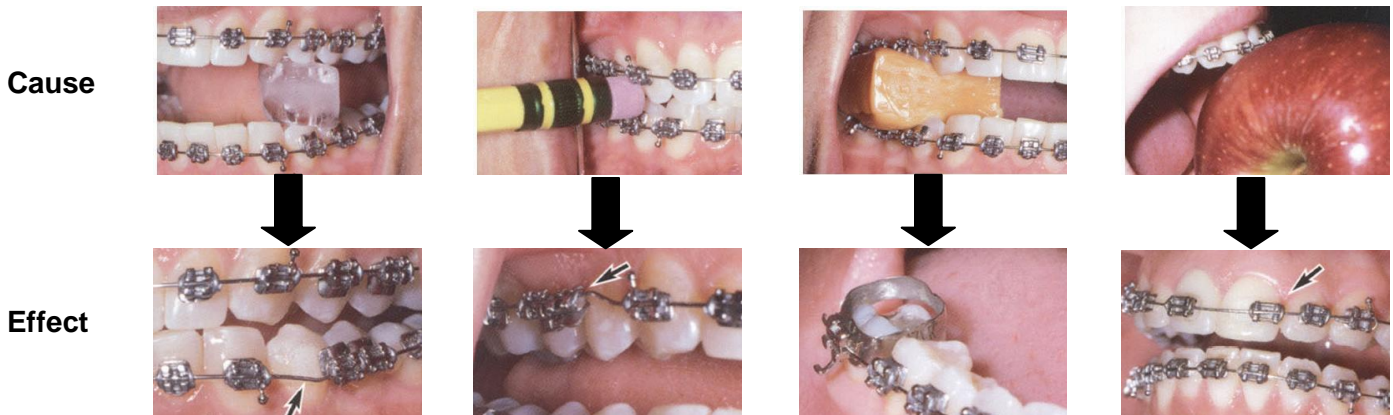
DECALCIFICATION

Improper oral hygiene will lead to tooth decalcification or "white spots." These are white scars that are permanent.



****IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE WITH YOUR DENTAL CHECK-UPS AND CLEANINGS EVERY SIX MONTHS WITH YOUR GENERAL DENTIST****

PREVENTING EMERGENCIES



Keep objects such as pencils, fingers and other objects that can loosen or break your appliances out of your mouth.

Wear a protective mouth guard for all sports.

Watch what you eat. Limit sugary foods and sugary drinks to avoid decay. Cut your food into bite-sized pieces and avoid biting into anything. For example, you should cut corn off the cob and cut meat off bones.

FOODS TO AVOID

●Ice	●Popcorn	●Gum	●Taffy	●Nuts	●Pretzels	●Doritos
●Carmel	●Raw Vegetables	●Sticky/Hard Candy	●Tootsie Rolls	●Acidic Food	●Hard Crusty Bread	●Hard Taco Shells

Each broken bracket and wire leads to a longer treatment time!

EMERGENCY GUIDELINES

Listed below are guidelines to assist you in resolving orthodontic issues.

Please save this form and post it in an accessible location such as on your refrigerator.

1. Most orthodontic emergencies are "annoyances" for patients, and it is rare that an orthodontic appliance difficulty requires immediate attention by an orthodontist.
2. Don't panic when a problem arises. Most difficulties can be resolved over the telephone.
3. If you have any discomfort after a visit, you may take aspirin, ibuprofen, or Tylenol (whichever you normally take for a headache).
4. Wax is helpful. Using wax can relieve and make irritating areas in your mouth more comfortable. If there's a wire poking inside your mouth, gently tuck it back into place with a blunt object and cover it with a piece of wax until you make it into the office. When using wax, the drier the bracket, the better the wax sticks.
5. If you cannot secure the wire with wax, you may use a nail clipper to cut the wire until you are seen in the office.
6. If a wire has caused irritation to your cheek, you should rinse with salt water several times a day until your cheek has healed.
7. If you break a bracket or your appliance becomes loose or damaged, please contact the office. If it is outside of normal office hours and it is not bothering the patient, please leave a message so our office staff can schedule an appointment for repair.
8. The office number is covered by an answering machine during non-office hours. If your concern is a true orthodontic emergency and you are unable to wait for normal office hours, follow the instructions on the answering machine to contact the clinical staff member who is on emergency call.
9. When in doubt, please call the office. We are always available when it comes to the care of our patients!

