

## **HOW TO KEEP YOUR TEETH CLEAN WITH BRACES!!!**

Please use the following recommendations to keep your teeth clean and healthy while you wear your braces. Failure to brush & floss regularly may lead to **gingivitis** (gum infection), **permanent white spots** on the front surface of the teeth (the first stage of a cavity referred to as decalcification of the enamel) and can eventually lead to deeper cavities. **Purchase products at Wal-Mart/Target/CVS/ Walgreens.**

Please visit [www.durrettorthodontics.com](http://www.durrettorthodontics.com) and click on Patient Resources then Caring for Ortho Appliances and Emergency Care for instructional videos.

### **TOOTHBRUSHING**

- Brush **3-4 times/day** for at least **2 minutes**. Clean above & below the braces
- Use only toothbrushes with **soft bristles**
- Use an **interdental brush** **every time you brush** your teeth to clean underneath the wire and hooks
- **Electric toothbrushes** can be used with braces
- A **Waterpik** is also useful to remove food around braces. This is optional, and should not be used as a substitute for brushing or flossing.
- Use **fluoride toothpaste** (most OTC toothpastes)
- **Do not** use **whitening** toothpaste

### **FLOSSING**

- Floss once a day (preferably at bedtime)
- Use **Superfloss** (Oral-B), **floss threaders** or Floss picks (Dentek Braces Clean)

### **MOUTH RINSES**

- **Fluoride mouth rinses** once a day (ACT, Phos Flur, Fluori-guard) **at night after brushing/flossing.**
- **Antibacterial mouth rinses** once a day (Crest Pro-Health Rinse, Listerine) **in the morning after brushing.**
- Do not use both types of rinses at the same time.
- Rinse for 30 seconds. Do not eat/drink for 30 minutes after mouth rinses.

### **MOUTH SORES AND TOOTH SORENESS**

- If the braces are rubbing the inside of your lips or cheeks causing a sore, place wax over the bracket(s) near the sore. Be sure to **dry off the bracket(s) before placing wax on it...**wax will not stick to a wet surface!
- If the sore continues to get worse, use a **peroxide-based mouth rinse** (Peroxyl by Colgate) to help heal the sore.
- You may also use a product (Zilactin, Orabase by Colgate, Canker Cover) that is placed directly over the sore to temporarily cover & numb the sore.
- It is normal for your teeth to be sore after the braces are placed and after each orthodontic visit. Take over-the-counter pain relievers as needed.

**Continue to see your dentist for regular cleanings at least every 6 months while in braces. You will need to schedule an appointment with our office for wires to be removed prior to the cleaning and replaced after the cleaning. We recommend scheduling your cleaning appointments around your regular orthodontic adjustments to minimize the number of appointments you need.**

**Dr. Durrett's office reviewed the above oral hygiene instructions. I understand the importance of maintaining good oral hygiene.**

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Print Patient Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient/Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# What can I eat?

Let's talk about what you shouldn't eat! For the first few days or so, stick to soft foods (for example, yogurt, soup, pasta). You will need to protect your orthodontic appliances throughout treatment, please be advised **this is only a suggested list. You will need to use your discretion when eating other foods not specifically listed below.**

- Please cut or tear all food into small pieces before eating.

## Foods to Avoid:

- Chewy foods: bagels, hard rolls, pizza crust
- Crunchy foods: popcorn, Doritos, Combos, Fritos, hard tacos, nachos, pretzels, raw vegetables, croutons, hard breads, cereal, granola, bacon
- Sticky foods: caramels, gum, licorice, Starburst, Skittles, Tootsie Roll, Air heads, Now & Laters, gummy snacks
- Hard foods: nuts, candy
- Foods you have to bite into: corn on the cob, apples, carrots, ribs, chicken wings
- Avoid tough meats and beef jerky
- Chewing on hard things (for example, pens, pencils or fingernails) can damage the braces. Damaged braces will cause treatment to take longer.
- Ice. You may have ice in your drink but please do not chew it.

Our goal is to eliminate breakage, decalcification and staining, facilitate good oral hygiene and finish your treatment in the shortest amount of time. **Breakage is one of the greatest factors that extends your time in braces.**

The instructions given and food guidelines that we have provided is to ensure proper care of your smile while it is “under construction”. If you have any questions or problems that may arise please do not hesitate to ask or call.

**Patients have the responsibility to check everyday** to make sure nothing is broken. If anything does become loose or broken, please call our office within 24 hours of breakage to describe the specific problem. You will need to schedule a special appointment to correct the problem. We **do not** always have enough time during your regularly scheduled appointments to repair your braces and do the work necessary for the normal adjustment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Patient Name

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Date of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient/Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date