

Life with Braces

Eating with Braces

What can you eat? For the first few days after getting braces, stick to soft foods. Avoid tough meats, hard breads, and raw vegetables. After the first few days, you may incorporate additional foods into your diet as tolerated as long you generally stay away from hard, crunchy, and chewy foods. Please see the list below for foods to avoid during your orthodontic treatment. You'll need to protect your orthodontic appliances when you eat for as long as you're wearing braces.

Foods to Avoid

- Chewy foods: bagels, hard rolls, licorice
- Crunchy foods: chips, popcorn, ice
- Sticky foods: caramels, gum
- Hard foods: nuts, candy
- Foods you have to bite into: corn on the cob, apples, carrots (*note: you may still eat foods such as corn and apples, but they must be cut up or removed from the cob prior to eating them*)
- Chewing on hard things other than food can also damage your braces (for example, pens, pencils, or fingernails). Damaged braces will likely increase the amount of time it takes to complete your orthodontic treatment.

General Soreness

When you get your braces on, you may feel general soreness in your mouth and teeth may be tender to biting pressures for a few days. This can be relieved by rinsing your mouth with a warm salt water mouthwash. Dissolve one teaspoonful of salt in 8 ounces of warm water and rinse your mouth vigorously. You may also use over-the-counter medication that you would normally take for a headache or similar pain as directed on the bottle. Your lips, cheeks, and tongue may also become irritated for one to two weeks as they toughen and become accustomed to the surface of the braces. You can put wax on the braces to lessen this discomfort. We'll show you how!

Loosening of Teeth

A slight loosening of your teeth is to be expected throughout treatment. Don't worry! It's normal. Teeth must loosen first so they can be moved. The teeth will again become solidly fixed in their new (corrected) positions after your orthodontic treatment is complete.

Loose Wire or Band

Don't be alarmed if a wire or band comes loose. This happens occasionally. If a wire protrudes and is irritating, use a blunt instrument (for example the back of spoon or the eraser end of a pencil) and carefully, gently push the irritating wire away from your cheek or lips. Simply get it out of the way if possible. If irritation to your lips or mouth continues, place wax or wet cotton

on the wire to reduce the discomfort. Call our office as soon as possible for an appointment to check and repair your appliances. If any piece comes off, save it and bring it with you to the office.

Caring for Your Appliances (braces)

To successfully complete the treatment plan, the patient must work together with the orthodontist. The teeth and jaws can only move toward their corrected positions if the patient consistently wears the rubber bands, headgear, or other appliances as prescribed. Damaged braces will likely increase the amount of time it takes to complete your orthodontic treatment.

Brushing and additional oral care tips

It's more important than ever to brush and floss regularly when you have braces so the teeth and gums are healthy during and after orthodontic treatment. Patients who do not keep their teeth clean may require more frequent visits to their family dentist for a professional cleaning or in extreme cases may result in termination of orthodontic treatment. **IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE TO VISIT YOUR FAMILY DENTIST AT LEAST EVERY SIX MONTHS WHILE YOU ARE UNDER ORTHODONTIC CARE!** We want you to have the best result possible and visiting your family dentist regularly helps ensure the long term health of your teeth and gums.

Adults who have a history of gum disease may also need to see a periodontist during orthodontic treatment. Dr. Bomeli and your family dentist will assist you in determining if seeing a periodontist or any other dental specialist is necessary.

Athletics

If you play sports, it's important that you consult us for special precautions. A protective mouthguard is advised for playing contact sports. In case of any accident involving the face, check your mouth and the appliances immediately. If teeth are loosened or the appliances damaged, call us at once for an appointment. In the meantime, treat your discomfort as you would treat any general soreness.

Dr. Bomeli and The Solon Orthodontics Team

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