

CHANGING EATING HABITS

During the course of orthodontic treatment, you will need to adjust your eating habits. Certain precautions must be taken while eating during treatment. Below please find a list of changes that must be followed during treatment.

1. Never eat anything hard, stick, or chewy. Some examples of foods to avoid while wearing braces are candy, gum, caramels, taffy, and nuts. Also avoid biting into hard apples, or carrot sticks, or tearing into meat, bagels, etc.
2. Foods should be cut into small pieces with a fork and knife before eating.

NAMING THE PARTS OF ORTHODONTIC BRACES

Orthodontic braces have certain names that you should be familiar with. They are as follows:

Band	The circular, metal brace that usually fits around the first molar teeth.
Brackets	The metal or clear braces that are attached to the front of each individual tooth.
Archwire	The wire that goes of the brackets and fits into the bands.
Rubber Donuts	The small circular pieces of rubber that are either gray, clear, or different colors that are placed around each individual bracket to keep the archwire in place.

WHAT TO DO FOR DISCOMFORT AND IRRITATION

You will experience some discomfort during treatment. To alleviate the discomfort you should take whatever you might take for a headache or cold, such as Tylenol or aspirin.

Irritations on the inside area of your cheeks and lips may occur from the braces. If so, place a piece of wax directly over the bracket on the band that is causing irritation. This will alleviate the irritation and it will eventually go away. We will supply you with the wax.

TELEPHONE CONTACT

If you should have an emergency, such as broken parts or loss of an orthodontic appliance, or if you should have any questions or concerns, please call the office immediately for assistance. Should the need arise to change or cancel an appointment, please notify the office at least 24 hours in advance. (973) 256-3912.

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ORAL HYGIENE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL ORTHODONTIC PATIENTS

In order to decrease the chance of cavities, decalcification (white spots on teeth), gingivitis (puffy and bleeding gums), periodontitis (bone disease), and other dental problems associated with poor oral hygiene, Dr. Cooper HIGHLY RECOMMENDS the following:

1. BRUSH 3 - 5 TIMES PER DAY

Brush after every meal. Bring a toothbrush to work or school. A small toothbrush (child or junior size) with soft bristles is easier to maneuver around the braces than a large toothbrush. It is extremely important that you brush all surfaces of the individual braces as well as the teeth. Make sure to brush between the braces and the gums. We know that brushing with orthodontic appliances can be challenging, however it is vital to your dental health. Remember: tooth brushing is not a sporting event. You don't get points for finishing fast! You will need to brush longer with the braces on than you did without them. The difference is comparable to running a straight, flat race and running through an obstacle course. The obstacles naturally will slow you down. It is the same with your braces. Your goal is remove as much food debris as possible with each brushing and this requires extra time, attention and work.

2. USE A WATER-PIK OR SIMILAR IRRIGATION PRODUCT ONCE OR TWICE A DAY

This will remove much of the foold debris that escapes your toothbrush. It is important to use your water-pik on a low setting and angle it to avoid pushing food under the gums.

3. FLOSS ONCE A DAY

Yes - it is possible to floss with braces and it really is not that difficult. The trick is to get the floss under the archwire (between two teeth), floss the adjacent sides of those two teeth, pull the floss out and repeat the process between two other teeth until the whole mouth is complete.

4. RINSE WITH A FLUORIDE RINSE (Act or Fluoridgard)

Read and follow the instructions on the bottle carefully.

5. HAVE YOUR TEETH PROFESSIONALLY CLEANED

Your teeth should be professionally cleaned by a hygienist and checked by a dentist for cavities at least once a year. Although it is true that braces interfere with cleaning of the teeth and the detection of cavities, a good dental exam with x-rays before orthodontic treatment starts, and regularly thereafter, will help prevent small cavities from becoming large ones.

These are the MINIMUM requirements. For some patients it may be necessary to change this regimen to fit their individual needs.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THESE INSTRUCTIONS PLEASE ASK US!