

## Information For Fixed Orthodontics

Wearing braces requires patience and discipline. Often, the result of treatment can be more than just a healthy smile. Having braces also prevents bigger problems from developing later.

**1. Extra time is needed to clean and brush your teeth properly. You may have to brush your teeth and gums after every meal regularly and effectively.**

Proper oral care at home is important because it will help keep your treatment time on course and might even help reduce it. Furthermore, it will contribute to the long-term health of your teeth and gums

This is important as braces can act as a "plaque trap," increasing the amount of plaque in your mouth, which in turn can lead to an increased risk of **cavities** and **gum disease** resulting in permanent damage to teeth and gums.

### How do I clean all areas of my mouth while wearing braces?

At first, doing a good job removing plaque from your teeth and along the gum line may seem difficult with braces. But keep at it: with a bit of practice, it will get easier! Following these tips can also help:

First, take large removable parts (like headgear).

- One recommended brushing method is to place your brush at a 45 degree angle to the gum. Apply gentle pressure as you brush with a short back-and-forth motion, cleaning each tooth individually for about 10 seconds.
- Use the same brushing motion on all inner and outer tooth surfaces.
- Don't forget to brush the chewing surfaces of your teeth - and make sure you reach the teeth in the back, too.
- Finish by cleaning around your braces, brushing first from the top and then from the bottom. Brush gently and take care not to break or bend any of the brackets or wires.

### How do I floss with fixed braces?

Flossing removes the plaque between your teeth and under your gum line-areas beyond the reach of your toothbrush. In fact, if you don't floss, you're leaving up to 40% of your tooth surfaces untouched and uncleaned.

Choose a "threading floss" with a stiffened end that threads it through the gap between each tooth - above the wire for your upper teeth and below the wire for your lower teeth. ( super floss)

Curve the floss around each tooth in a "C" shape and gently move it up and down the side of each tooth, including under the gum line. Unroll a new section of floss as you move from tooth to tooth.

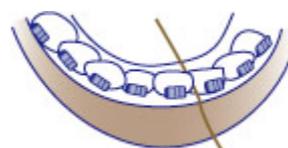
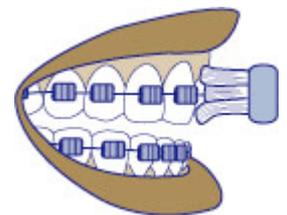
### Cleaning a removable appliance

After you take the appliance out of your mouth, brush and clean between your teeth in the normal way. Then, using your toothbrush and toothpaste, clean your appliance, rinsing thoroughly with water afterwards.

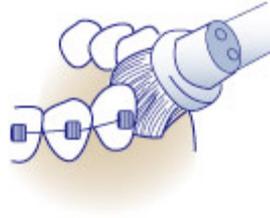
Also, make sure that you gently brush the gum areas that are covered by your appliance. This includes the roof of your mouth if you wear the appliance on your top teeth.

### Which products are best for braces?

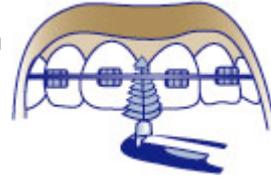
Orthodontic toothbrushes have bristles trimmed in a 'V' shape for cleaning above and below the brackets and wire.



**Power toothbrushes** can remove more plaque than ordinary manual toothbrushes. And some of the newer ones have brush heads specifically made for use with braces.



**Interdental brushes** have very small heads with fine bristles, perfect for cleaning under wires and between teeth. Check with your dentist how you should clean around your braces with this type of brush.



## 2. Change in diet

This is necessary as careless eating may:

- bend wires
- break brackets
- loosen bands

which in repairing will **LENGTHEN** your treatment. **ALSO POOR COOPERATION, POOR ORAL HYGIENE AND EXCESSIVE BREAKAGE OF THE APPLIANCES WILL LENGTHEN YOUR TREATMENT TIME**

- Do not chew gum with the braces
- Avoid soft drinks, sport drinks, cordial and fruit drinks
- Apples and hard pieces of fruit must be modified and cut into smaller pieces
- Keep sweets to a minimum - if eaten, try to eat all at once rather than every hour
- No toffees or lollies, or similar foods.
- Habits like nail biting, pencil chewing or wire picking should be stopped, they can break braces.

Eating excessive amounts and frequency of high sugar foods or drinks (eg: fruit juice, coke) can cause decalcification (permanent white marks) on your teeth and tooth decay. These produce **ACID** which erodes the tooth surface. Tooth decay is very difficult to treat with braces on, therefore please try to avoid this!

**3. If any parts of your appliance falls off or breaks, please make sure you keep any parts and bring it with you to repair it at your next visit...losing these parts can incur an extra fee. If a bracket or band becomes loose, PLEASE CALL TO LET US KNOW and an appointment will be scheduled appropriately. This is usually NOT an emergency and does not require immediate attention.**

## 4. Change in lifestyle

Your daily routine will also be affected by:

- Monthly visits to the dentist to have the braces tightened and checked
- A mouthguard should be worn if playing sports
- Carry a toothbrush with you as often as possible.

**5. All treatments are subject to patient co-operation in wearing the given appliance as directed, you may be required to wear elastic bands. Failure to follow the instructions of use for these elastics or appliances will mean slower treatment progress and less satisfactory results.**

**6. You have to expect pain to happen after the first band up visit. Mild pain killers like Panadol or Neurofen should be adequate to control pain. Also minor cuts and trauma can happen to the gums and cheeks, special wax will be provided for you to apply to those areas that are causing soreness. If you need more wax please let us know, or wax can be purchased at the chemist or supermarket**

**7. You still need to see your dentist for regular hygiene and exam visit at least 6 monthly or as your dentist recommends.**

## **THE FOOD CHART**

### **FRIENDLY FOODS:**

Milk, eggs, cheese, yoghurt, soup, pasta, water, fruit smoothies, bread, fish, meat

### **SOMETIMES:**

Sugar, cakes, biscuits, icecream, pies, diet drinks, chips, flavoured milk

### **TO AVOID**

Sticky Foods (chewing gum, caramels, lollies)

Hard Foods (Nuts, popcorn, pizza crust, ice)

Non foods ( chewing on fingernails and pencils)

Fizzy drinks

Beacon Cove Dental Group wishes you all the best! We will see you on your journey!

In an emergency, please call: (03) 9646 1599

Warmest Regards,  
Dr. Fern T White