



## Post-operative instructions for orthodontic braces

### Your compliance improve treatment outcome

Whether you will be wearing conventional braces, clear aligners, or other orthodontic appliances, the success of your treatment will depend in part on your compliance with care as well as the efforts you make to keep your teeth and braces clean and healthy.

### Adjustment phase

Every orthodontic patient will experience a period of adjustment when his or her appliances are initially placed. The first few days of wearing braces typically take the most getting use to and are the most challenging. During this time you may feel a general soreness in your mouth and your teeth may be tender to biting pressures for a few days.

Depending on the type of braces you have been given, it may also take a week or two for the lips, cheek, and tongue to get accustom to the presence of the appliances. It is important that you keep in mind that these sensations will pass.

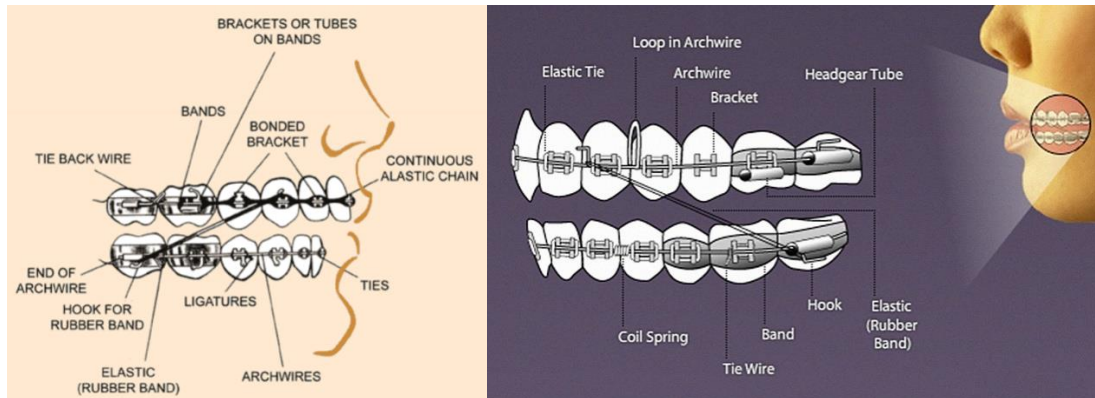
If you are wearing conventional braces, a supply of orthodontic wax and instructions as to how to apply it to a wire or a brace that has become irritating, will be provided.

### Careful about what you eat

While wearing braces you will need to be more careful about what you are eating as well as more diligent in keeping your teeth and appliances clean. Eating certain foods (especially hard, sticky, crunchy, or tough foods) and certain oral habits (like chewing ice, biting pens, or nail biting) can be very damaging to braces.

### Getting to know your appliance parts for better understanding

Here is a diagram of everything that will be in your mouth for the next couple of years. It is important to learn a few basics so that if something does break or come loose, you can tell us what it is. Some things can wait, and some can't. If you know exactly what it is that's broken or loose, we can tell you if you need to come in right away or not.



Risky behavior and frequent appliance breakage can significantly prolong your treatment and possibly compromise the result.

### What to expect following fit of your fixed appliance:

**Rubbing:** For the first 2-3 days the brackets may rub a little on the lips and cheeks. This is because the lips and cheeks are not used to the brackets being there. After a few days the lips stop bumping into the brackets and any soreness will settle

**Tenderness:** All the teeth are on the move now and so there may be some tenderness in the first few days. A soft diet and painkillers if required should be all that is needed. If you have any discomfort that is not settling after 4-5 days or you feel that something has broken please get in touch as soon as possible.

### If you wear rubber bands

When and if the doctors tell you to wear your rubber bands, just wear them! Why? First, if you don't wear them, you are going to be "stuck" in braces for much longer than you would normally be. Second, the doctors are going to know! They can tell if you've been wearing them, no matter what you might try to tell him. Rubber bands are a GOOD SIGN! They mean you are getting closer to the end of your treatment, so don't stop now!

### Cleaning is the essence of success

Keeping your teeth, gums, and orthodontic appliances clean over the course of care is of the utmost importance. Food and plaque are easily trapped in the tiny spaces between your braces as well as underneath removable appliances or aligners. In the absence of good oral hygiene your teeth can become decayed or permanently stained, and your gums can become irritated and inflamed. There is also a greater risk of developing a dental infection.

Brushing after every meal, and flossing at least once a day, is the best way to insure that your teeth and gums remain healthy throughout treatment. It is also recommended that you brush your teeth after eating snacks.

However, if you don't have a toothbrush on hand at this time, you can clean your mouth by rinsing vigorously with water.

### **Never miss your appointments**

If you miss a lot of appointments, guess what? You will be in braces longer than you have to be! Also, if you miss appointments without calling us to let us know, you may end up getting charged for these. It is very important that the doctors see you on a regular scheduled basis.

### **Please remember**

We will be forced to stop your treatment if your tooth brushing is consistently poor to avoid damaging your teeth. Please remember to attend your dental check-ups with your regular dentist throughout your orthodontic treatment so that your teeth can be checked for decay.