

Life With Braces

Now that you have your braces, how do you take care of them? It's important for you to know how to properly take care of your braces throughout your entire orthodontic treatment.

Eating with braces

Don't worry, you'll be eating regular food again in no time! However, before you can start enjoying some of the treats you love, you will need to take special care to avoid any foods that could damage your new appliances.

Foods to avoid with braces:

- Chewy foods — fruit roll ups
- Crunchy foods — popcorn, chips, ice
- Sticky foods — toffee, minties
- Hard foods — nuts, hard lollies, crusts of vogels toast, pork crackling
- Foods that require biting into — corn on the cob, whole apples, raw carrots



Foods you CAN eat with braces:

- Dairy — soft cheese, pudding, yoghurt
- Breads — wraps, toast, muffins
- Grains — pasta, rice
- Meats/poultry — most are ok, just cut up into smaller pieces
- Seafood — fish, salmon, prawns
- Vegetables — mashed potatoes, steamed spinach, beans
- Fruits — most are OK, bananas, fruit juice
- Treats — ice cream, milkshakes, jelly, soft cake

Soreness caused from braces and appliances

When you first get your braces, you may notice that your teeth and mouth feel a little tender or sore. This is perfectly normal and we promise your mouth will not be sore forever! If the discomfort is bothering you, you can try taking a pain reliever such as panadol or nurofen. It is also not uncommon for your lips, cheeks, and tongue to become irritated until they become used to the braces. We will give you some wax that you can put over the braces to provide a bumper until the soft tissues adjust to the new appliances.

Loose teeth

If your teeth begin feeling a little loose, don't worry; this is normal! Your braces must first loosen your teeth to move them into the right position. Once your teeth have been repositioned, they will no longer be loose.

Loose wires and bands

The wires and bands on your braces may come loose. This is most common with the first wires which are very small and flexible, and can easily pop out of the last tube. If this happens, try to replace it in the tube with some tweezers or contact us so that we can decide if we need to check and repair your appliance.

You can temporarily fix a loose tie wire (around each bracket) by using something metal (e.g. tweezers!) to carefully and gently push the wire back into place. If the loose wire is causing irritation to your lips or cheeks, put wax or a wet cotton ball over the broken wire to provide a bumper.

Take care of your appliances

Damaged appliances can increase the length of your treatment process, so be sure to take care of all your appliances. Your teeth and jaw can only move into their correct positions if you consistently wear the rubber bands, headgear, retainer, or other appliances prescribed by your doctor.

Playing sports with braces

Game, Set, Match — we have great news for athletes! You can still play sports even while undergoing orthodontic treatment! If you do play sports, it's recommended that you wear a mouthguard to protect your teeth and your appliance. Let your doctor know if you need help finding the right mouthguard for the best protection.

In case of a sports emergency, be sure to immediately check your mouth and appliance for damage. If you notice any loose teeth or appliance damage, please contact our office right away. You can temporarily relieve the discomfort by applying wax or rinsing your mouth with warm saltwater.

Braces Diagram

Elastic Tie

Small rubber band that is hooked between different points on the appliance to provide pressure to move the teeth.

Loop in Archwire

Frequently used for closing space left by an extraction. Many archwires don't have a loop.

Archwire

The main wire that acts as a track to guide the teeth along. It's changed periodically throughout treatment, as teeth move to their new positions.

Bracket

Small attachment that holds the archwire in place. Most often, a bracket is cemented directly onto the tooth's surface, eliminating the need for a band.

Headgear Tube

Round, hollow attachment on the back bands. The inner bow of the headgear fits into it.

Coil Spring

Fits between brackets and over archwire to open space between teeth.

Tie Wire

Fine wire that is twisted around the bracket to hold the archwire in place.

Band

A thin ring of metal fitted around a tooth and cemented in place. The band provides a way to attach the brackets to the tooth.

Hook

Welded or removable arm to which elastics (rubber bands) are attached.

Elastic (Rubber Band)

Small rubber band that is hooked between different points on the appliance to provide pressure to move the teeth.