



## Congratulations on starting your orthodontic treatment!

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 popcorn and snacking on potato chips 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 - bagels, licorice
- Crunchy foods - popcorn, chips, ice
- Sticky foods - caramel candies, chewing gum
- Hard foods - nuts, hard candies
- Foods that require biting into - corn on the cob, apples, carrots

#### Foods you CAN eat with Braces:

- Dairy - soft cheese, pudding, milk-based drinks
- Breads - soft tortillas, pancakes, muffins without nuts
- Grains - pasta, soft cooked rice
- Meats/poultry - soft cooked chicken, meatballs, lunch meats
- Seafood - tuna, salmon, crab cakes
- Vegetables - mashed potatoes, steamed spinach, beans
- Fruits - applesauce, bananas, fruit juice
- Treats - ice cream without nuts, milkshakes, Jell-O, 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! To relieve the pain, we recommend dissolving one teaspoon of salt in eight ounces lukewarm water. Swish and gargle this solution in your mouth for just a couple of minutes (do not swallow the saltwater).

If the pain is more severe and does not go away after rinsing, you can also try taking a pain reliever. It is also not uncommon for your lips, cheeks and tongue to become irritated for 1-2 weeks as they toughen and become used to the braces. We would be happy to give you some wax that you can put over the braces to lessen the tenderness. If you need some wax, please let us know.

Please be sure to bring your retainers with you to all of your retainer check appointments, so that we can check them in your mouth. **If you break or lose your retainers, give us a call right away - you don't want to give your teeth a chance to move!**

Retainers are a lifetime commitment and you should continue to wear them every night. This will keep your teeth aligned properly and ensure the retainers will continue to fit properly. You will no longer require monitoring after 12 months. However, if a problem arises, please call our office as soon as possible and we will be happy to see you.