



EATING HABITS AND ORTHODONTICS

Much work and effort has gone into the construction and placement of your orthodontic appliances. We encourage you to take care of your braces by keeping them clean and being careful with the types of foods you put in your mouth. Breakage of your braces results in extra appointments (usually during school hours) for repairs and will lengthen the total time of your treatment. Please read the following information and ask us for any clarification.

WATCH OUT FOR...

HARD FOODS: Hard foods may cause damage by bending the wires, loosening the cement under the bands or breaking the brackets that are bonded to the teeth. Some examples of those foods are listed below along with the ways that they may be eaten:

CARROTS OR CELERY: Grate, cook or cut into thin pieces.

APPLES: Cut into bite size pieces.

FRENCH BREAD, HARD ROLLS, BAGLES: Avoid hard crusts.

CORN ON THE COB, CHICKEN, RIBS: Cut off cob or bone.

PLEASE DO NOT EAT NUTS, HARD PRETZELS, HARD PIZZA CRUST OR HARD CHIPS.

TOP HALF (BUT NOT THE BOTTOM HALF) OF THE POPCORN BAG OR BOWL IS OK

CHEWING ICE CUBES IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN!!!

STICKY FOODS: Sticky foods can damage the appliances by bending wires and loosening the cement, actually pulling them off the teeth. **PLEASE DO NOT EAT TAFFY, SUGAR DADDIES, PEANUT BRITTLE, CARAMELS, CANDY APPLES, LICORICE OR ANY OF THE CURRENTLY POPULAR TYPES OF STICKY CANDIES SUCH AS STARBURSTS OR NOW AND LATEERS.** The only gum permissible is one stick at a time of sugarless gum – no regular gum or bubblegum of any kind, please.

FOODS HIGH IN SUGAR CONTENT should be limited. The germs (bacteria) that cause tooth decay, decalcification and gum disease need sugary food on your teeth in order to live. Please brush your teeth immediately after each meal, since most of the damage occurs within the first half hour after eating.

GUMS THAT BLEED NEED MORE BRUSHING – DO NOT AVOID THEM. Please use the pocket toothbrush which we have given you when you are away from home (at school etc...)

TROUBLE SHOOTING

POKING WIRE OR BAND: Use the wax we have provided to cover the irritating part and call the office for an immediate appointment. Please remember to dry off the area first so that wax will stick better. If you do not have wax with you, use cotton, tissue or gauze until we can take care of the problem. Moldable silicon ear plugs, available at any pharmacy, work very well. Sometimes the eraser end of a pencil can be used to push a small poking wire back into place.

LOOSE BAND OR BRACKET:

Please do not wait until your next scheduled appointment, but call us immediately, even if you have an appointment the same day, so we can set aside the necessary time for the repair.

BROKEN WIRES: If it is a small tie wire, you may remove it and call the office. If it is the main arch wire (which connects all the teeth), try to move it so it is comfortable and phone the office for an appointment. If it is not possible to make it comfortable and you are unable to come to the office immediately, please cut the wire as close as possible to the nearest bracket it is still secured to (use a small wire cutter or fingernail clipper). Use wax over the area if necessary.

DISCOMFORT: When pressure is applied to the teeth, you may feel some tenderness which usually persists for 2-3 days. The intensity and duration of the discomfort will vary with each patient. If you feel an unusual amount of pain or discomfort, please call the office immediately. For after hour emergencies, a recorded message will tell you how to reach Dr. Bernstein or another orthodontist if Dr. Bernstein is out of town. If no one is reachable, please call your general dentist.