



## LIFE WITH BRACES

### DIET MODIFICATIONS

Foods that cannot be cleaned off the braces may lead to discoloration and decay of your teeth. Even though the braces and wires are metal, they are fragile and are usually damaged by eating the wrong foods, thereby taking us longer to finish our treatment.

#### ABSOLUTELY NO

- **Gum** (sugarless or otherwise)
- **Sticky foods** (caramels, Starbursts<sup>®</sup>, caramel apples, licorice, toffee, Now & Laters<sup>®</sup>, Tootsie Rolls<sup>®</sup>, gummy bears, Fruit Roll-ups<sup>®</sup>, Sour Patch Kids<sup>®</sup>)
- **Hard Foods** (nuts, popcorn, hard candy, toasted bagels (unless cut into small pieces), Pizza (unless cut into small pieces), apples/carrots (unless cooked/cut into small pieces), corn on the cob, ice, jerky, hard pretzels, Doritos<sup>®</sup>)
- Avoid chewing on pens, pencils, and fingernails

#### MINIMIZE SUGAR INTAKE

- **Eat Less:** candy, cookies, cake, pie, ice cream, sugary foods
- **Drink Less:** soda, sugary juices, drinks with sugar

### PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

You may be able to solve many braces problems temporarily by yourself until you schedule a repair appointment with our office. These problems need not cause delay in your treatment.

<u>PROBLEM</u>	<u>HOME SOLUTION</u>
Loose band/bracket	If a band/bracket is still attached to wire, leave in place. If uncomfortable, place wax on it. If it comes out completely, wrap brace/bracket in tissue.
Loose wire	Try to place wire back in place with tweezers. If that is not possible, clip wire with fingernail clippers behind last tooth to which it is securely fastened. If any discomfort, place wax on it.
Poking wire	Try to push sticking wire down with an eraser; if not possible, place wax on it.
Lost colored tie	Notify us at next appointment.
Soreness	It is normal for teeth to be tender when chewing for ~1 week following the placement of braces. Use warm salt water and/or Tylenol or Ibuprofen
Loose appliance	If appliance is sticking or poking, place wax on it
Headgear does not fit	Sometimes caused by not wearing as prescribed. If facebow is bent, call office to schedule appointment to adjust

### BRUSHING & FLOSSING

- Brush 4 times/day (morning, noon, dinner, bedtime), using a soft bristle toothbrush. Brush slowly & take your time!
- Brush under, above, behind, and around ALL surfaces of teeth & braces.
- Brush inside & outside of both top & bottom gums.
- Rinse mouth thoroughly after brushing.
- Before bed, rinse thoroughly with over-the-counter fluoridated mouthwash (take care NOT to swallow the fluoride rinse).
- To floss, insert floss under archwire. Gently clean sides of teeth & under gums with an up-and-down motion; floss between ALL teeth once a day.