

## **CARE WHEN WEARING BRACES**

It is extremely important that you take the time and effort needed to keep your teeth and braces clean. This will help you avoid problems such as dental decay, inflamed gums and tooth decalcification. Decalcification is when you lose the mineral calcium from the surface of your teeth, and this may leave white spots on your teeth after the braces are removed. It is also important to keep your routine dental examinations during orthodontic treatment. This is to make sure that your teeth and mouth stay healthy.

The largest problem posed to your teeth when you have braces is plaque. Plaque forms not only on the surface of your teeth but also where the brackets meet your teeth and between your teeth. Brushing your teeth becomes more than the usual brushing. When you have braces you want to use a brushing method called “stir” brushing, which involves holding the toothbrush at a forty five degree angle and moving it in quick small circles all over the front and back of each tooth. Take extra care to brush the brackets as well. While it can be tricky to maneuver dental floss around the wires of your braces, you still have to do your best to floss your teeth everyday. You might want to invest in a water pick to reach into the areas that your toothbrush can’t get, and use a fluoride mouth rinse. Using a mouth rinse regularly can help prevent dental decay and tooth decalcification. It might sound like a long routine, but in time you will get this entire routine down to a few minutes.

Keep a look out for potential mouth sores. Your cheeks and lips are going to rub up against the wires and brackets of your braces. The mouth rinse will have properties to keep your cheeks and lips healthy as well as treat any sores that are developing. If a sore does erupt, you will want to use dental wax to help provide a barrier between the brackets and the sore. You should also keep an eye out for wires sticking out the back of your braces. If you notice anything poky back there you will want to put some dental wax on it and contact your orthodontist immediately. The orthodontist can clip the wire so that it won’t cut your cheek.

Lastly, your orthodontist will provide you with a list of foods that aren’t good for people who wear braces. Pay attention to this list. There is a reason you need to avoid the food on it. Chewing gum can catch on the brackets and accidentally pull them off. Popcorn can get caught in between the gums and the roots of your teeth and cause an infection.

It might sound like a pain to practice proper care when wearing your braces, but believe it or not, before too long it will feel like an easy routine. In fact, you will fall into such a habit that you won’t remember not following your care routine.