

**Orthodontic Instructions**

**The speed and ease of your orthodontic treatment is directly related to your care. If you cooperate with treatment as instructed, we will be able to finish your treatment on or early of the expected schedule. Not wearing your appliance, elastics, or not activating the appliance screws properly, only do our best to give you a great smile with your help!**

**Care of all ortho appliances and retainers:**

* Your appliance must be worn at all times as directed. Failure to do so will prolong treatment and the length you have to wear the appliance.
* Clean your appliance/retainer by scrubbing with toothpaste and toothbrush.
* Soaking in mouth wash will “freshen up” an appliance that has attracted mouth odors. You may occasionally soak the appliance in Efferdent (or similar denture cleanser) solution to dissolve any white calcium deposits that may accumulate.

Your appliance will rarely become broken if it is worn in your mouth as intended, or kept in the safety case first. It will not become broken or lost if always kept in your mouth or stored in the case properly.

**Twin Block/Bionator:** The bionator and twin block is a functional appliance that only works when it is being worn 24 hours/day, taken out only to eat (bionator only), brush your teeth, swimming or very active play and sporting activities. The Twin Block appliance should be worn while eating and chew “stick-free” type of gum for 4 hours/day.

**WARNING:**

* When eating at school or at a restaurant be careful not to leave your appliance on the tray or wrapped in a napkin, as it can easily be thrown away by mistake. Most appliances are lost this way!
* Don’t pick at your appliance/and or braces with your tongue, fingers, lips, pens etc. Accidents to appliance or loose bands MUST be reported to the office at once. If a protruding wire causes irritation, cover it with wax and call the office for advice. A wire can always be trimmed for comfort.

**Care of your teeth with braces:**

* You will be supplied with a special cleaning kit with several brushes and aides to clean under the braces at the gum line. Use your regular tooth brush on the braces and the chewing surfaces of your teeth.
* If your teeth/braces remain dirty, we will suggest a special water pic (Hydrofloss) unit to improve your cleaning efforts and possibly more frequent cleanings with the hygienist. If not kept extremely clean, decalcifications (white spots) can remain on the surface of your teeth once the braces are removed. You are working so hard for beautiful straight teeth, let’s keep them clean!

**Eating with Appliances and Braces**

**Foods you CANNOT eat:**

* Chewing gum, caramels, licorice, taffy and hard candy
* Potato chips, corn chips, nachos or hard pretzels
* Apples, or other hard fruits or vegetables such as carrots or celery, unless cut into small pieces
* No type of nuts
* Avoid hard steaks and meats
* No chewing or crunching on ice
* Be careful in sports/horseplay to avoid being hit in the mouth
	+ A mouth guard for sports is recommended.

**Correct Eating Habits and Diet**

* Minimize sugar containing beverages and follow with water as able.
* DO NOT eat hard apples, carrots etc, unless they are cut up in small pieces and chewed with the back teeth.
* DO NOT eat pastries and excessively starchy foods that are hard to keep out of brackets.
* Be careful biting into a sandwich. Chew primarily on the back teeth. Chewing thoroughly- do not swallow food in large pieces just because it is difficult. Learn to chew slowly.

**To Parents of Orthodontic Patients:**

**This is a list of rules by which Ortho Patients must abide!!**

 As most orthodontic patients are still in school, they often become involved in activities which are time consuming and tend to cause the patient to neglect proper home care of their teeth. As parents, it is your responsibility to see that the child keeps the teeth clean at all times, abides by these rules and cooperates with the work the doctor is doing. The patient is checked by the doctor every 4-6 weeks. Therefore, cleanliness and cooperation will be observed and reported once the patient arrives at the office. If the patient is careless and neglectful in their home care or eating habits, teeth may become de-calficied. This often results in cavities, bent, loose, or broken appliances. Your cooperation as well as the child’s is necessary for proper results to obtain a beautiful smile.

1. **CLEAN YOUR TEETH & APPLIANCES AT ALL TIMES**
	1. Brush teeth and appliances with a soft nylon bristle brush, gently, so as not to bend appliances or injure gum tissues.
	2. Teeth are to be brushed after eating. This includes light snacks between meals. If the child eats at school, teeth should be cleaned at school. A portable/packable tooth brush is supplied with the Orthodontic Survival Kit.
	3. Check teeth after brushing and **make sure they are clean.** Leave no debris at the gum lines or in any of the hard to reach areas. These spots are vulnerable and if not kept clean will cause decay and also the white lines often seen are caused by neglect and poor brushing.

**REMEMBER- Appliances DO NOT cause the white lines on the teeth- IT IS THE FOOD PARTICLES ARROUND THE APPLIANCE WHICH CAUSE UNSIGHTLY WHITE LINES.**

1. **TAKE CARE OF THE APPLIANCES**
	1. Do not bend, break or lose parts of the appliances. Brackets may work loose (if this happens, call the office at once). Lost appliances will incur a charge.
	2. Check bands daily to see if they are loose. Stress of the appliances may loosen a band. Improper care of the appliances and lack of caution in eating may loosen a band.

**REMEMBER- LOOSE BANDS ARE DANGEROUS AND CAN CAUSE DECALCIFICATION AND DECAY OF TEETH.** One days step in the wrong direction with a lost bracket or bent wire may take several days to correct.

1. **KEEP APPOINTMENTS AND BE ON TIME**
	1. If you cannot keep an appointment, call before time.
	2. If you miss an appointment call for another, don’t expect to be called.
	3. Failure to keep appointments and follow directions may result in improper movements and longer duration of treatment- with additional costs.
	4. IF you are aware of a loose bracket or band, call and inform the office before your appointment, so we may prepare to re-secure it.

**REMEMBER-APPOINTMENTS ARE VALUABLE- PLEASE RESPECT THEM.**

**Reminders:**

1. Ortho appliances do not cause decay or decalcification of teeth.
2. Improper/inadequate tooth brushing habits cause decay and decalcification of teeth.
3. Broken or loose appliances, when not taken care of immediately, will cause decalcification of teeth.
4. Eating of highly starchy foods and candy, cakes and pies, etc. will help cause decay. As the gum tissues become irritated from appliances, the sweets will make this condition worse- to an extent that the appliance may have to be removed and the gum tissues and teeth treated- **at an extra cost.**
5. Should the patient fall and injure the teeth or facial structures in any manner, call the office immediately.
6. You are wearing appliances/braces to straighten your teeth so that you will have an attractive smile and appearance. Do not ruin that nice appearance by neglecting to use your toothbrush or by not cooperating.