

Orthodontic Success

By actively taking part in your treatment, you, your orthodontist and the office staff will develop a mutual confidence, and together you'll advance step-by-step towards your ultimate goal...a healthy, beautiful smile.

Foods to avoid

Braces are delicate and easily damaged, so what you eat becomes especially important in caring for your braces. Chewing ice, for example, can really cause a lot of harm.

Here are some examples of foods that should be avoided:

Sticky Foods

- Caramels
- Taffy
- Chewing Gum

Hard Foods

- Hard Candy
- Popcorn
- Pizza Crusts
- Nuts

It is important to eat a healthy, well-balanced diet, including plenty of fruits and vegetables. Even if some foods are hard and crunchy — an apple, for instance — you can cut them into small pieces. Also remember, unless you can brush immediately afterwards, sugary foods should be avoided.

Feelings

Your braces may cause some discomfort during the first few days of treatment and after some subsequent adjustments. There are several things you can do to minimize this problem. Eat soft foods for the first few days. Use a warm saltwater rinse, as needed. Consider taking over-the-counter analgesics such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, as needed. Put wax over any problem areas.

Orthodontists receive an additional two to three years of specialized education beyond dental school to learn the proper way to align and straighten teeth. Only those who successfully complete this formal education may call themselves "orthodontists," and only orthodontists can be members of the American Association of Orthodontists.

If you have any questions or concerns throughout your treatment or in the future, please consult your orthodontist or visit mylifemysmile.org.



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Things to Know

Teamwork

Orthodontic treatment is an ongoing process, and most of it happens when you're not in the office. Teamwork between you, your orthodontist and the staff is essential. This brochure will serve as a handy reference to help you do your part in developing attractive teeth and a healthy smile.

Appointments

It's vital to keep all of your office appointments. If not properly monitored, braces can adversely move teeth, causing damage or lengthened treatment time.

It is also important to:

- Be on time for appointments.
- Give the office at least 24 hours notice to change or cancel an appointment.
- Continue to see your dentist regularly for check-ups and cleaning.

Brushing and flossing

The biggest enemy of your teeth is plaque and the most common and effective means of removing plaque from your teeth is regular brushing and flossing.

Brushing Techniques

- Hold the brush at an angle and press firmly against the teeth, flexing the bristles.
- Move the brush in small circles, cleaning the tooth surfaces.
- Brush above the archwire and below it.
- Brush the backside and chewing surfaces of all your teeth.

Flossing Techniques

- Slide the floss gently between the teeth.
- Avoid snapping the floss through a tight space.
- Rub the floss up and down the sides of each tooth.
- Do not use a shoeshine or see-saw motion.

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Parts of braces

It is essential for you to be able to identify various parts of your braces so that you can communicate with your orthodontist. It is essential for you to be able to identify various parts of your braces so that you can communicate with your orthodontist should a problem occur.

