

## Home Instructions – Orthodontics

### Beginning Orthodontics

#### Hygiene

- ◆ The most important thing to remember with having braces is to keep your teeth clean.
- ◆ You should be brushing after every meal, flossing at least once a day, and rinsing with a fluoride rinse, such as ACT.
- ◆ You may also want to invest in an Oral B or Sonicare toothbrush.
- ◆ Make sure that you are brushing along the gum line above and below the brackets.

#### Eating Habits

- ◆ Now that you have braces there are a few things that you should stay away from.
- ◆ Popcorn, caramels, taffy, sodas, and nuts are some of the foods that you should not eat.
- ◆ These items can cause damage to your braces.
- ◆ You should also not chew gum of any kind.
- ◆ You will need to cut up raw fruits and vegetables and pop them into the back of your mouth.

#### Elastics

- ◆ You may need to wear elastics at some time during your treatment.
- ◆ Wear your elastics all the time removing only to brush your teeth and replacing all elastics if one should break.

#### Breakages

- ◆ There may be a time when a bracket or band becomes loose.
- ◆ During the first two weeks of treatment the brackets will be replaced at no charge. After this time has lapsed you will be allowed 3 free breakages.
- ◆ After your 3 breakages there will be a charge of \$25 per bracket.

#### Appliances

- ◆ There may also be a time when you may be required to wear an appliance.
- ◆ Some appliances are removable but there are some that are fixed appliances.
- ◆ Follow all instructions on wearing and cleaning your appliance.
- ◆ There may also be a charge for broken or lost appliances.

#### Retainers

- ◆ At the end of your treatment you will be given a retainer to wear.
- ◆ You will be wearing the retainer all the time, removing only to eat and brush.
- ◆ You will wear the retainer for about 6 months at full time wear and may then be weaned to nighttime.
- ◆ There is a charge for lost or broken retainers of \$250.00.

## Orthodontics Instructions

### Eating with your appliance / braces

- ◆ If you have been instructed to eat with your appliance in place, it would be a good idea to stick to soft foods such as eggs, cereals and soups for the first few days.
- ◆ Avoid chewy meat, chewing gum, popcorn, ice, sodas, sticky candy or anything hard such as crusty bread, hard candy, whole apples or other fruits and vegetables that you would need to bite with your front teeth (these can be cut into bite-sized pieces).
- ◆ After eating, if you are unable to brush, go to a nearby water fountain or sink to get a mouthful of water. Swish this around vigorously and spit it out. This will loosen any large debris until you can brush properly.

### IMPORTANT: Do not chew gum or drink sodas when wearing your braces!

### Soreness

- ◆ After each visit, you may have some slight discomfort. If a wire is replaced, your teeth may be sore. This is expected and is a sign the teeth are moving.
- ◆ If you have a sharp spot on your bracket or band that irritates your mouth, roll a little piece of wax into a small ball and press it over the rough spot on your braces.
- ◆ If you are running low on wax, be sure to stop by the office to get more as soon as possible.
- ◆ Never attempt to "fix" your braces yourself. If you feel something has broken, bent or come loose, call us immediately.

### Breakage

- ◆ We understand that accidents do occur and brackets, bands or wires will become loose or break.
- ◆ If your appliance breaks – call our office immediately! Do not attempt to fix or wear the broken appliance.
- ◆ Save ALL the pieces and be sure to bring them with you to your appointment. If there is excessive breakage (more than three repairs) there will be a repair charge \$25 per bracket, if patient has bracket, or \$40 per bracket if bracket has been lost.
- ◆ For some reason, dogs and cats love to chew on appliances; care should be taken to keep them out of their reach.
- ◆ Do not carry your appliances loose in your pockets. The wires will bend and the appliances will subsequently not fit properly.

### ALWAYS KEEP THE APPLIANCES IN THEIR CASES!!!!

### Lost Appliances

- ◆ Call the office immediately! We will have to make a new appliance as soon as possible so we do not lose all the good we have accomplished. (HINT- more appliances seem to get lost in the trash with school lunch papers than by any other single cause).
- ◆ Keep your appliance in its case and in your pocket if you remove it from your mouth for eating.

### Brushing

- ◆ You must take good care of your teeth and appliance by proper and adequate tooth brushing.
- ◆ You should brush immediately after each meal. This may mean carrying a toothbrush with you. Also brush after each snack throughout the day.
- ◆ If it is impossible to brush, go to a nearby water fountain or sink to get a mouthful of water. Swish this around vigorously and spit it out.
- ◆ To help you keep the teeth and appliances clean, we will advise you on some new and different brushing aids as needed. Some of these may be:
  - ◆ Disclosing tablets – use according to directions. Any place which remains red after use is an area which has been missed with your cleaning. Pay special attention to these areas from now on.
  - ◆ Floss – this will be a time-consuming and tedious process. You will need to use a flossing aid in order to get the floss behind the wire.

- ◆ Flossing Aid (floss threader / super floss) – this will aid in threading the floss behind the wire to clean in between every tooth.
- ◆ Proxy brush – this is a Christmas tree shaped brush used to clean behind the wire and in between the brackets.
- ◆ Regular toothbrush – brush your teeth, cheeks and tongue in your normal fashion. Be sure to clean the cheek side of your teeth extremely well. The brackets will hold bacteria and debris next to the teeth.
- ◆ Fluoride rinse – after complete cleaning of your teeth and appliances, vigorously rinse for a full minute. Be sure not to eat or drink for at least thirty minutes. We recommend the use of a fluoride rinse twice a day to prevent the possibility of enamel decalcification. Rinses that can be purchased at the drug store are ACT and Fluoroguard.
- ◆ Mints – If decalcification occurs, there is now an ingredient found on the market in certain mints called XYLITOL. This ingredient is actually a sugar and, when dissolved in the mouth will, over time, replenish the calcium in your teeth. DO NOT CHEW MINTS – this will cause breakages.

**It is extremely important to continue to have your regular dental check-ups and fluoride treatments as usual during your treatment.**

**Inadequate hygiene habits will result in three things occurring:**

- ◆ Gum inflammation / periodontal disease
- ◆ Tooth decay and / or tooth decalcification (brown spots)
- ◆ If the above two conditions continue without significant improvement, the braces will be removed

**Elastics**

- ◆ If Dr. Brown decides wearing elastics will benefit your treatment, you must wear your rubber bands as directed. This part of your treatment depends solely on your cooperation.
- ◆ The conscientious wearing of these elastics will soon be evident.
- ◆ Always be sure you understand exactly where each elastic hooks and that you can do it yourself.
- ◆ Carry a supply of the correct sizes of elastics with you at all times so you can replace one if it breaks.
- ◆ If you find yourself running low on elastics, stop by the office immediately for more.

**Be Positive!**

We are looking forward to providing you with a beautiful smile and proper bite. Your cooperation is needed and will expedite treatment. Just think, at the end of treatment we will both have something to smile about!