

## FOR OUR NEW ORTHODONTIC PATIENTS

Your orthodontic appliances (braces) represent an investment by you in your future oral health and well-being. The guidelines below were designed to help you have a great smile and speed up the day when your braces come off.

### Cooperation

Cooperation is by far the most important factor for a successful result. Poor cooperation can increase the time you spend in treatment and keep you from achieving a great result. In extreme cases lack of cooperation may result in an additional fee. Accordingly, the following guidelines should be observed:

1. Keep appointments promptly.
2. Wear appliances and/or elastics as instructed.
3. Do not pick at or play with the appliances.
4. Avoid chewing gum, candy, and hard or sticky foods. **NO BAGELS or RAW CARROTS.**
5. Brush teeth regularly and keep teeth spotlessly clean.  
Use fluoride gel or special fluoride toothpaste daily.
6. Check for loose bands and broken appliances daily and report any problems to the office.
7. Continue to see your dentist on a regular basis for examinations and cleanings.

### Irritation

You will be given wax which should be saved throughout your treatment. Any irritating area can be covered until your lips, tongue and cheeks adjust. If the soreness persists or something is bent or broken, call the office.

### Food

You will probably want to eat only soft foods for the first few days after you get your appliances (braces) or after each adjustment. The rest of the time you can eat almost anything, but certain foods can damage your appliances and should be avoided. You should **NOT** eat:

***Crunchy Foods-*** any nuts or seeds, peanut brittle, popcorn, ice, frozen items, hard bacon, granola, or hard cereals.

***Raw fruits and Vegetables-*** raw apples, pears, carrots, celery, or radishes. If cooked or cut finely, they can be eaten.

***HARD BREADS-*** **NO BAGELS**, French or Italian bread, pizza crust, tacos, tortilla chips, and breads or cookies with nuts.

***Finger Foods-*** corn on the cob, spare ribs, and meat left on the bone, such as chicken wings, steak or chops.

***Chewy foods-*** all kinds of gum, taffy, caramel, chewy candy, and candy apples.

***Sugary Foods-*** candy bars, lolly pops, non-diet soft-drinks, and other high sugar content foods.

***Caution:*** Not every single item has been listed in each category. You should use your best judgment, if you think it's too hard or too sticky: **DO NOT EAT IT!** Each time you eat the wrong thing and something breaks or loosens on your braces, it lengthens the time you will have your braces on.

## Brushing

Dirty teeth and gums can cause decay, mouth odor, and an unsightly appearance. Although the appliances themselves will not harm teeth, they do tend to collect food. If this food is not removed in a short time, damage to the enamel surface may result, leaving PERMANENT, visible, spots, lines or patches on your teeth.

Do not use mouthwash that contains alcohol. It can damage bracket cement.

## Breakage

Check daily for anything unusual and do NOT play with any part of your appliances with your tongue, fingers, or pencils, etc. If something breaks, bends, does not fit, or is loose, call the office. If any part of your appliance comes off, save the piece in an envelope and remember to bring it with you to the office.