

## INSTRUCTIONS: BRACES

Your new braces are likely to make your teeth somewhat sore for a few days. If you have discomfort, you may take whatever pain reliever you would use for a headache. Eat soft foods as needed for the first few days. If you can tolerate eating foods that aren't as soft, go ahead and do so. The more you use your teeth for chewing right from the start, the less sore your teeth will be.

Braces may initially affect your speech, but with practice, it will quickly improve. You may experience increased saliva for a day or so, but this will soon return to normal.

### WHAT TO EXPECT

Keep your mouth clean by brushing and using a Waterpik® around all the appliance parts, your gums, and tooth surfaces.

If something comes loose, call our office to schedule a visit even if you have a regular appointment scheduled. If the braces or wire ends bother your cheeks or tongue, try placing wax over the area. If you frequently get canker sores, please let us know, and we can recommend a medication. Use warm salt water rinses as needed to help heal sore spots on your cheeks and lips.

### DIET

Your appliance will affect your eating, but you will eventually learn to eat almost anything. However, do not bite into anything hard or sticky, like caramels, jelly beans, jawbreakers, taffy, etc. Also, do not chew on ice, or hard foods such as corn nuts. These kinds of foods can cause your braces to become loose. There are lots of foods you can eat with your new braces! Most importantly, you can eat all the fruits and veggies that you've always enjoyed, just remember to cut harder foods like apples and carrots into small pieces. Make sure to cut all your meat off the bone. You can eat breads, but be careful with tough, crusty breads and bagels. While you will need to avoid sticky, chewy and gummy candy, like Starburst®, you can still enjoy things like Reese's® Peanut Butter Cups®, 3 Musketeers®, marshmallows, and Hershey's® bars (without nuts).

### HYGIENE

Braces or appliances may make it more difficult to clean your teeth. Though brushing and flossing are still the primary ways to clean your teeth, we recommend some additional steps in your daily routine. It is important to remember swollen gums, permanent scars on the teeth, and cavities can result from poor brushing.

Powered toothbrushes are very helpful since they are more likely to clean all over and are also motivational. We recommend using a brush with a small brush head to get all around your appliances.

Fluoride hardens the enamel surface and is highly recommended. It should be in your toothpaste and mouth rinse. Use as directed on the packaging.

A Waterpik can shoot a pulsating stream of water into areas that are inaccessible to toothbrushes. The addition of some fluoride to the Waterpik is even better. Add 3 capfuls of fluoride mouthwash to the water, and follow the Waterpik unit instructions.

For any questions or concerns, please call (559) 432-7100. If you have a question or issue after business hours that cannot wait until the office opens, please call (559) 432-7100 and the message will instruct you on how to reach our on-call doctor or assistant.