

## INSTRUCTIONS: ORAL HYGIENE

One of the most critical parts of your orthodontic treatment is keeping your mouth healthy and clean. While we work hard at creating your new smile, it's your job to take care of your teeth, gums, and new appliances.

Brushing your teeth is the first step in caring for your mouth. Brush your teeth after every meal or snack for at least 2 minutes to make sure that any food debris is removed. We recommend using a toothbrush with a small head and soft bristles to reach difficult areas in your mouth.

Carefully brush each tooth using small circular motions. Make sure you're applying enough pressure to your teeth to clean them properly. You should feel the bristles on your gums while you're brushing. Brush all surfaces of each tooth and around your appliances until you've cleared any plaque or debris from your mouth. Remember to brush the other areas in your mouth too! Plaque and bacteria can build up on your gums and your tongue. Once you've finished cleaning your teeth, carefully brush these areas using the same small circular motions with the toothbrush.

Once you've finished brushing, it is time to floss the areas between your teeth. Using a floss threader will make this an easier task for you. Pull the floss through the eye of the threader. Then, weave the threader behind your wire, and pull the floss up to your gum line. Gently work the floss around the area between your teeth and gums to clear any remaining debris. We recommend starting on one side of your mouth and carefully working your way around, making sure you get between all your teeth on the top and the bottom.

Before you wrap up, check your smile to make sure you've done an excellent job! A small mirror can help you check behind your teeth and in the back of your mouth to make sure you've cleaned every surface. With just a little bit of time and effort, you'll have a healthy mouth and a gleaming smile when it's time to take off your appliance!