



LIFE IN BRACES

First of all, you did it! Keep looking forward to the end goal, knowing that we're here behind you all the way. A partnership between you, your family, and us will make for smooth and efficient progress. Making some modifications to eating and your brushing routines will make every day easier! Read on for some tips and suggestions.

FOODS

YES! There are many foods and treats you can enjoy in braces! Meal planning will make eating less stressful, enjoyable, and successful. Pastas, rice, pastries, mashed anything, steamed veggies, Quaker oatmeal bars, meats and fishes, smoothies, egg-based dishes, oatmeal, casseroles, soups – these are all great. If you have a sweet tooth, consider plain Hershey bars, Kit Kats, Reese's cups, York Peppermint Patties, and Junior Mints; most "chunk-free" ice creams, pudding, applesauce are also great.

MODIFY. Cut hard fruit into wedges (apples, pear, peaches, plums); cut meat off bones (wings, drumsticks, ribs); slice corn off the cob.



NO! It is best to avoid foods that fall into these categories: hard, sticky, chewy and crunchy. Braces don't break because of the last thing you ate. The glue weakens with repetition. Think of trying to break a paperclip. The last bend takes little to no effort. Please avoid most candies, including hard candies, lollipops, mints and cough drops; pizza crust, bagels, croutons, whole nuts, ice, beef jerky, frozen fruit, and many energy bars. Pita chips, Fritos, Cheetos, and Doritos can be too hard as well as raw veggies like celery sticks, broccoli, and carrots.



AVOID! Habits like chewing on your mouthguard, pens, pencils and fingernails. Popcorn, which can create gum infections.

SORES AND POKING WIRES

Crowded teeth require more wire to engage into all the braces. As the teeth straighten, the wire expresses out the back. A long wire can also occur when teeth slide along the wire to close spaces. Always try using a pea-sized amount of orthodontic wax to cover the braces and wire. If this isn't effective, please call our office to schedule a comfort visit. If you develop a cheek sore, use wax to cover the irritant and use warm salt water rinses to clean and soothe the sore. It is antibacterial and kinder than Scope or Listerine. Rinse often!

SALT WATER RINSE: ¼ tsp table salt to 8 oz warm water. We recommend making a large bottle and keeping it at the bathroom sink. Simply shake gently before each use.

HYGIENE

Take your time and stay focused on your techniques to thoroughly remove all the plaque from your braces. Every aspect of braces – brackets, wires, colored ties and powerchains – increases the surface area for plaque to grow on. If you brush all the sides of the braces, you will get your teeth clean. Make sure to brush 2x/day and floss once a day. You would be surprised what time and focus can do with a brush and floss. Extra tools like a Waterpik or Waterflosser are not required. If you need more Christmas tree brushes, let us know.

BRUSHING. Expect to spend about 5 minutes each time you brush. The technique we showed you should be applied with a regular or electric brush. Either way, please use the Christmas tree brush to clean the sides of the braces and keep the gums in between the braces healthy.

FLOSSING. Make sure to floss gently below the gum line where the plaque accumulates. You may use the floss threaders we provided or purchase Superfloss or Platypus Flossers at most drugstores.

DISCOMFORT

Your first day will feel tight and weird. Your 2nd and 3rd days are the peak discomfort days. Things improve after that. Remember, we want your teeth to move, so this is normal and each person has a different threshold. This is the typical cycle of discomfort after each adjustment as well.

Distraction is the best medication, so continue with school, work, sports, activities, etc.

Cold drinks and ice cream are also helpful for literally cooling down the activity of the wires – just avoid chewing ice.

Eating soft foods, small bites, and chewing on your molars can also help.

An alternating schedule of Advil and Tylenol every 4-6 hours for the first 3-4 days can also help. When taking these elevated doses of Advil, please take with food or milk.

Over 100 lbs: 800 mg Advil, 4-6 hours later take 650 mg Tylenol

Under 100 lbs: 400 mg Advil, 4-6 hours later 650 mg Tylenol

We are here to support your success! Please do not hesitate to text us with questions, or email a photo of your issues to info@AllStarSmilesOrtho.com. We are happy to help!

www.AllStarSmilesOrtho.com

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