



Dear Patients and Parents,

Welcome to Smile Frederick! We are excited you have entrusted your orthodontic care to us. This guide will help familiarize you with our office and with your braces.

A Quick Look- Office Guidelines

1. Follow the orthodontist's instructions to get your best results as soon as possible! The length of treatment varies upon multiple factors, like age and the severity of orthodontic problems, but the easiest way you can help speed up the process is by following our instructions.

2. Oral hygiene matters, especially during orthodontic treatment! Braces can be traps for small food particles, so it is essential you clean your teeth and braces properly throughout the duration of treatment. We will assess your oral hygiene at each appointment.

- When plaque gathers around your braces or appliances, it can cause stains and cavities.
- Failing to brush and floss can cause your gums to become inflamed during orthodontic treatment. Gum disease can also hinder with orthodontic treatment.

3. **Visit your general dentist regularly for exams and cleanings every six months.**

4. **Please keep your appointments or provide a 24-hour notice if you cannot keep your appointment.** Visiting the orthodontist regularly keeps the orthodontic process moving along as quickly as possible. Missed appointments can prolong the duration of your treatment.

- Longer appointments are typically given during work and school hours. Shorter appointments can be accommodated before or after work and school hours.
- If you miss an appointment without a 24-hour notice, you will be charged a \$55 fee before your next appointment.

5. Wear and care for your appliances as instructed. Damaged appliances require repair as soon as possible.

- **Call our office if your appliance / brackets break. (301-788-2522)** Based on the severity of the breakage, we will let you know if you need to come in for an appointment to fix the broken appliance sooner than your scheduled appointment.
- We recommend you place orthodontic wax in problem areas to reduce discomfort.

6. **Break bad habits, including thumb sucking, nail biting and pen cap chewing, as these habits can delay the orthodontic process.**

7. Steer clear of sweets, especially those that are sugary, chewy and sticky.

8. Proper rubber band wear is essential. Please follow the orthodontist's specific instructions for the most effective treatment.

9. Wearing your retainers as instructed is imperative to maintaining your new smile. The retention period stabilizes the tissue around your teeth and prevents teeth from shifting.



Oral Hygiene Techniques

(Visit our website www.smilefrederick.com and go to the Wearing Braces section to view our dental hygiene instructions.)

Once a day, your brushing session should be more comprehensive and last about 10 to 15 minutes.

The following information covers oral hygiene, including rinsing, dental floss, the proxabrush and brushing.

How to:

1. Rinse your mouth thoroughly with water. We recommend using an oral irrigator to help eliminate food that has gotten stuck in your braces or appliance.
 - Some irrigators include “Water Pik” and “Interplak.” These cost between \$40 and \$70. They supplement vigorous brushing and flossing well to help you achieve excellent oral hygiene.
2. **Floss daily to dislodge food particles.** We recommend using a threader and floss or Oral-B Super Floss. Ask one of our office staff members to show you how to properly floss with braces.
3. Use a proxabrush, or small conic brush, twice daily around each bracket. Proxabruses significantly decrease the risk of cavity stains. You can find them in pharmacies. Make sure to replace them each month.
4. **We recommend you brush after every meal and snack for 2 minutes while wearing your braces.**
 - Hold your toothbrush diagonally (45 degree angle) at the gum line with the bristles facing toward your braces. Make sure your bristles move under and around the brackets and wires.
 - Brush teeth in sections, two or three teeth at a time, by making small circular motions with the toothbrush. You should concentrate on each section of teeth for a minimum of 10 seconds.
 - Brush the other surfaces of your teeth, including the back of your teeth and your tongue.

Discomfort

If you are experiencing sensitivity, you can take an over-the-counter pain reliever, such as ibuprofen (Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) to reduce discomfort.

- To relieve persistent discomfort, make sure to take the recommended dosage
- Please read all instructions and disclaimers on the label before taking medication to see if it is right for you.

Orthodontic Wax

Your new braces can temporarily

Newly installed braces can temporarily cause irritation and discomfort. We recommend applying orthodontic wax in problem areas to reduce discomfort.

- Orthodontic wax is edible, and it prevents the braces from rubbing against areas of your mouth and helps heal mouth sores.

We recommend you rinse your mouth daily with a salt and warm water solution. This practice also helps heal mouth sores.

- Wax is especially helpful for temporary relief of discomfort caused by a poking wire or breakage.

Broken Bracket



Broken brackets usually do not hurt, and it is safe to wait a few days before repairing.

- Call our office as soon as possible to avoid extending the duration of your treatment.
- If you repeatedly break brackets, you inevitably delay treatment.
- Eating hard, chewy or sticky foods and bad oral habits are often to blame for broken brackets.

Food and Nutrition

Now that you have your braces, how do you take care of them? It's important for you to know how to take care of your braces properly throughout your entire orthodontic treatment.

Don't worry, you'll be eating popcorn and snacking on potato chips again in no time! Before you can start enjoying some of the treats you love, however, you will need to take special care to avoid any foods that could damage your new appliances.

Foods to Avoid With Braces

- Chewy foods — bagels, licorice
- Crunchy foods — popcorn, chips, ice
- Sticky foods — caramel candies, chewing gum
- Hard foods — nuts, hard candies
- Foods that require biting into — corn on the cob, apples, carrots

Foods You CAN Eat With Braces

- Dairy — soft cheese, pudding, milk-based drinks
- Breads — soft tortillas, pancakes, muffins without nuts
- Grains — pasta, soft cooked rice
- Meats/poultry — soft cooked chicken, meatballs, lunch meats
- Seafood — tuna, salmon, crab cakes
- Vegetables — mashed potatoes, steamed spinach, beans
- Fruits — applesauce, bananas, fruit juice
- Treats — ice cream without nuts, milkshakes, Jello, soft cake

Sweets

Sugary foods should be avoided as much as possible.

Stay away from acidic drinks such as soft drinks and energy drinks and sports drinks. Be mindful of the high sugar content in juices, hot chocolate and sweet coffee.

Here are a few guidelines for sugary drinks:

- Avoid sipping sweet drinks for long periods of time, as it can cause tooth decay.
- Rinse your mouth with water after drinking a sweet drink.
- Drinking sweet drinks out of a straw prevents most of your teeth from getting drenched in sweet liquid.



Sensitive Teeth and Discomfort

It is normal for your teeth to feel sensitive after getting your braces on or receiving adjustments. Usually, your teeth will start to feel back to normal in a period of 1 to 4 days. Eating soft foods is recommended during times of sensitivity and discomfort.

For example:

- Pasta
- Eggs
- Soup
- Fish
- Rice
- Yogurt
- Soft cheese

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