

# Homecare—Braces



Floss daily

## Caring for teeth with braces

Braces are a great way to straighten and realign your teeth to create the beautiful smile you deserve. However, caring for your teeth while you have braces can be challenging because there are a lot of brackets, bands, and wires to work around. Because these fixtures create dozens of nooks and crannies in your mouth, there are more places for food particles and plaque to hide. This can result in tooth decay, gum disease, and permanent staining, which will negatively affect the terrific smile your braces were meant to create.

## Your diet is important

Cutting down on sweets will help you avoid tooth decay, so avoid sugary foods and foods that stick to your teeth. Also, watch out for hard foods like Corn Nuts, popcorn hulls, and ice because they can damage your braces. It's best to eat softer foods and cut hard foods into smaller bites.

## Caring for your teeth

We'll be happy to show you special techniques for caring for your teeth while you have your braces.

Floss at least once a day. We'll give you a floss threader to use at home. Insert floss into the loop of the floss threader, and then insert the floss threader between the wires and your teeth. Remove the floss threader, pull the floss into a "C" shape around the side of your tooth, and floss up and down the sides of each tooth.

Check carefully to see if you've missed any areas, and then rinse thoroughly with plenty of water.

Use fluoride toothpaste and a toothbrush with soft bristles and a small head.

Brush in the morning, before bed, and after each meal, giving extra attention to the areas where the brackets and bands meet the tooth, and where the tooth meets the gumline. It's also a good idea to carry a travel toothbrush, so you can brush your teeth when you're away from home.

At times when you absolutely cannot brush, be sure to rinse your mouth thoroughly with water.

As you brush, angle the brush toward your gums and go over each tooth using a small, circular motion. Get between the wires and brackets as much as you can with the bristles of your toothbrush.

Don't forget to gently brush your gums, tongue, and the roof of your mouth.

Be sure to visit us every six months for an exam and a thorough, professional cleaning. We'll help you keep your mouth free from plaque and cavities.

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