

First Day in Braces

WHEN CAN I EAT?

The adhesive that Dr. Sturdivant uses for attaching braces to your teeth cures immediately. You can eat anytime after leaving our office, but please be careful and eat foods that are easy to chew. Until you become accustomed to eating with your braces, you may find it beneficial to follow a diet consisting of soft foods.

WILL THE BRACES CAUSE DISCOMFORT?

Initially, the braces may feel like they “stick out” This is normal. As you become accustomed to your braces and as tooth alignment improves, this sensation will disappear. Although the brackets have been rounded and smoothed, you may find it helpful to apply a small piece of wax on your brackets until the cheek tissues have “toughened,” which should take 3-14 days. You will probably notice some discomfort the first few hours after your braces are placed. Some teeth may be tender and sensitive to pressure. Occasionally, patients report that they experience no discomfort, but most have some soreness during the first four days, with the third and fourth day being the most sore. You may wish to take non-prescription pain remedies such as Advil, Tylenol or Aleve one hour before banding. Continue to take pain medication four times daily for three to four days after the initial banding if needed.

FOODS TO AVOID

Avoid hard foods; which may damage or break your orthodontic appliances. Breakage of brackets will significantly extend your treatment time. Please avoid the following:

- **Hard Foods:**
Ice, hard candy, pretzels, nuts, taco shells and unpopped popcorn kernels
- **Sticky/Chewy Foods:**
Gum, gummy bears, taffy, caramel, etc.
- **Take Extra Care With:**
Bagels, pizza crust and hard crust breads
- **Raw Fruits & Vegetables:**
Cut into small pieces and chew on your back teeth

Chewing on sugar-free gum can sometimes make your sore mouth feel better.



BRUSHING

- Please visit our website and go to our YouTube channel to view the brushing technique videos.
- Brush after every meal or snack.
- The most important brushing time is at night. Spend four minutes brushing with your electronic toothbrush. (Two minutes on the upper teeth; two minutes on the lower teeth.)
- The electronic toothbrush is most effective when you use small, slow circles. Angle the bristles up toward the gums and then down to clean the tops of the brackets.

FLOSSING

- Bleeding gums mean that you are not brushing and flossing enough. The braces themselves do not irritate your gums, but food and plaque left on your teeth do.

OTHER TIPS

- Use a Fluoride rinse every night, after brushing and flossing. No snacks or drinks after the fluoride rinse.
- Use an electric toothbrush for the entire programmed length of time. Start behind the very last tooth and work your way around to the other side making sure to tilt the toothbrush over and under the wire.
- Brush the top side of your tongue at least once a day.
- Every six months, schedule a cleaning with your dentist. This is especially important during orthodontic treatment.



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