

# Oral Hygiene for the Orthodontic Patients



**ANANNIYA**  
Dental Clinic & Orthodontic Centre

## Oral Hygiene for the Orthodontic Patients

If you thought brushing and flossing were important before you got braces...well, you were right. But people undergoing orthodontic treatment need to be even more dedicated to good oral hygiene.

Braces trap food very easily, which contributes to plaque (plaque is a mixture of bacteria, debris and food particles) formation. If plaque is not carefully removed from teeth and from around braces, patients run the risk of developing gum disease, dental decay and bad breath.

It's important to remove the plaque thoroughly and often. Then, when your braces come off, the teeth underneath will be healthy and strong and look good. Here are some tips to help you.

### **Brushing:**

Use a soft-bristle toothbrush (orthodontic toothbrush and interdental toothbrush) as recommended by your Orthodontist.

Brush at least three times a day. It is best to brush after meals to make sure there's no food trapped in or around braces.

Brush for at least two to three minutes each time. "Brushing should be done slowly and carefully. It's important to brush the braces and all the surfaces of the teeth, that is, the inside and outside surface and the chewing surfaces, too. Pay special attention to the areas between your brackets and your gums. You should take at least two or three minutes each time you brush.

Use fluoride toothpaste as recommended by your dentist/Orthodontist.

Antibacterial rinses — These rinses should be used as instructed by your Dentist/ Orthodontist.

### **Caring for your retainers/removable appliances:**

If you have a retainer or other removable orthodontic appliance, it needs to be cleaned regularly, too. After all, it spends a lot of time in your mouth.

Brush the appliance daily with your toothbrush and some toothpaste. This is especially important for the side that is in contact with the roof of your mouth or gums. You also can soak it in a cleaning solution. There are several that are advertised as denture cleaners. If you want to soak your retainer, talk to your orthodontist about which solution to use. Some cleaning solutions can corrode wires or other metallic areas on orthodontic appliances.

When brushing or soaking your appliance, never use hot water. It can distort the plastic and make the appliance unusable. When your retainer is not in your mouth, keep it in the case that your orthodontist gives you. Also, keep it away from your pets. Dogs and cats love the plastic and will chew it to bits if they get it.

### **General Soreness**

When you get your braces on, you may feel general soreness in your mouth and teeth may be tender to biting pressures for three to five days. This can be relieved by rinsing your mouth with a warm salt water mouthwash. Dissolve one teaspoonful of salt in 8 ounces of warm water, and rinse your mouth vigorously. If the tenderness is severe, take aspirin or whatever you normally take for headache or similar pain. The lips, cheeks and tongue may also become irritated for one to two weeks as they toughen and become accustomed to the surface of the braces. You can put wax on the braces to lessen this.

## Loosening of Teeth

This is to be expected throughout treatment. Don't worry! It's normal. Teeth must loosen first so they can be moved. The teeth will again become rigidly fixed in their new—corrected—positions.

### Know what to eat:

While you're wearing braces, you need to think twice about eating foods that could increase your risk of cavities. You also should avoid anything that might damage your brackets or wires. Frequently breaking your braces will add to the overall treatment time. Below is a list of foods you can have and avoid during Orthodontic treatment.

### PLEASE AVOID HARD FOODS, STICKY FOODS AND FOODS HIGH IN SUGAR.

- **HARD FOODS CAN BREAK OR DAMAGE WIRES/ BRACKETS**
- **STICKY FOOD CAN GET STUCK BETWEEN BRACKETS / WIRES**
- **SUGARY FOODS CAN CAUSE TOOTH DECAY AND RELATED PROBLEMS**
- **NAIL BITING , PENCIL BITING-CHEWING AND CHEWING ON FOREIGN OBJECTS TO BE AVOIDED**

### YOUR DIET (DO'S AND DONT'S)

#### **ABSOLUTELY NO:**

- BUBBLE GUM, PASTERIES, TOFFEES-CHOCOLATES, HALWA TYPE STICKY SWEETS
- HARD FOODS LIKE NUTS-DRY FRUITS, WHOLE APPLES,WHOLE CARROTS (UNCOOKED),CUCUMBER
- TOASTS, PIZZA CRUSTS,
- ICE /ICE CUBES, ICE CREAM WITH DRY FRUITS
- CORN ON COB
- POPCORN

#### **EAT LESS (EAT WITH CAUTION)**

- ICE CANDY, ICE CREAM
- CAKE , COOKIES,PIE
- SALADS HAVING BIG CARROT, BEET ROOT, CUCUMBER PIECES
- SAMOSA, KACHORI,PANI PURI ETC
- TANDOORI ROTI

#### **PLEASE AVOID**

- CAFFIENATED SODAS / SUGAR SODAS – (MOUNTAIN DEW, SPRITE, 7UP, THUMS UP, COKE, PEPSI, LIMCA ETC.)
- NON VEG FOOD HAVING BONE

#### **YOU CAN ALWAYS HAVE**

- REGULAR HOME MADE FOOD - TAWA ROTI ,SABZI, RICE, DAL , SOUPS
- NON VEG FOOD – SOUPS, BONE LESS MEAT
- FRUIT JUICES, MILK , CURDS, LASSI
- FRUITS LIKE APPLE SHOULD BE CUT IN TO SMALL PIECES
- DRY FRUITS CAN BE GRINDED TO CONSUME

## Your guide to Orthodontic brushing and flossing techniques

### Brushing For sparkling clean teeth!

On a soft bristled toothbrush, apply toothpaste of your choice.

In a small circular motion, brush your teeth back to front all around the brackets (not just the tips of your teeth.)

You can angle your toothbrush up and down to get between the wire and braces.

Also don't forget about your gums. Gums are very important too! Where the pink meets the white, also brush in small circular motions. This will keep the gums pink, pointed, and most importantly *healthy!*



Clean teeth move faster

### Adult Oral Home Care Instructions (for our adult patients)

Our adult patients must maintain a very strict regimen of excellent oral hygiene. The soft tissue supporting structures of adult teeth are much more susceptible to disease and damage during orthodontic tooth movement than a child's dentition. Subsequently, the following suggestions are made for our adult patients:

1. Take time to cleanse your braces at least 2 times per day.
2. Alter your routine 6 month tooth cleaning appointment with your dentist to a 3 month schedule.
3. Brush all surfaces of your teeth twice. The first time you can use toothpaste. For the second time, dip the head of the toothbrush in Listerine mouthwash. A multi tufted soft toothbrush should be used
4. Please let your Dentist know of any areas of your gum tissue that bleed.