

## START INSTRUCTIONS

Congratulations! Your braces are on and you are on your way to the beautiful smile you've committed to. To help you on this journey, we've put together some of the basic tools you need. We want to make your experience with braces exceptional, so much so that we want to exceed your expectations of service. It is our hope that your positive experience will lead you to become a spokesperson for our practice by sending your friends and family to us as well. Help us meet our goals by letting us know how we're doing.

Your braces have been placed, now what? During your treatment, you will be coming in every 4-8 weeks for appointments to change wires, elastic ties, check for loose bands or brackets, etc. While your braces are on, you will need to follow the instructions below to ensure the greatest comfort and ease throughout your time in braces. These guidelines are for your comfort and protection. And remember . . . have fun!

**No-No foods:** No popcorn kernels, ice, crunchy cereals, crunchy taco shells, hard nuts, taffy, caramels, and no hard candies. Any hard things that seem like they may create enough force to break off the braces.

**Maybe foods:** Pizza (avoid the hard outer edge), hard French bread, apples, carrots, celery, corn-on-the-cob (cut these into small pieces before eating), chips (break off into small pieces), any meat or chicken on the bone (cut the meat or chicken off the bone), and gum (sugarless).

**Breakage:** There may be times when one of your brackets or bands comes loose. We allow 4 of these occurrences throughout your time in treatment. With the breakage of the 5<sup>th</sup> bracket, we will charge an excessive breakage fee of \$35.00 each to help ensure we can all meet our goals of quality treatment finished on time. Any time breakage does occur, be sure to call us in advance to ensure enough time to repair properly. We may have to reschedule the appointment for a more lengthy time on another day.

**Brushing:** Brushing is very important during treatment. If you don't brush well enough to remove the plaque from your teeth, there is a good chance you will get white spots on your teeth that will never come off. We grade you on your brushing each time you come in for an appointment. If too many poor grades are received, we will express our concerns at periodic Progress Reviews with you or a parent, as is appropriate. If improvement does not occur, it may be necessary to discontinue treatment to preserve dental health.

**Toothbrushes:** We include an orthodontic toothbrush and a travel toothbrush in your start kit. You will need to purchase a new one from your drug store as they wear out about every 2-3 months.

**Floss:** We have included a sample of floss in your start kit for your convenience.

**Floss-threaders:** These are used to help you get the floss under your arch wire so you can floss between each of your teeth. While flossing is more difficult while your braces are on, it is still very important.

**Fluoride:** You will be using a fluoride gel every night after brushing your teeth. We include a sample as well as write you a prescription for the fluoride with 3 refills. Put the fluoride on your toothbrush and brush it on your teeth. When you are done, spit out all the excess gel and do not rinse. This, along with brushing and flossing, will keep your teeth protected from white spots and cavities.

**Wax:** Your kit includes a pack of wax to use if the bands or brackets are rough on your cheeks or lips. To use, make sure that the area is dry, roll up a little ball of wax and press it on the band or brackets that is bothering you. Eventually, calluses will reduce your regular need for wax.

**Proxabrush:** This is a bottlebrush that can be used to get in between those hard to clean places.

**Owner's Manual:** You will receive a booklet all about your braces. It is a helpful tool for you to read and learn about how your braces work, what things are called, and to answer some questions that you may have. Any questions that you may have that are unanswered, please feel free to call our office.

**Dental Cleaning:** Your teeth cleaning visit with your dentist and hygienist is still very important and should occur every 3 months.

**CONGRATULATIONS! YOU ARE ON YOUR WAY TO A BEAUTIFUL SMILE!**