

EMBRACE YOUR BRACE!



Your Brace is part of you!
Take Care of It!

Will it be uncomfortable?

For the first 48 hours, sometimes for even up to a week, after having your brace fitted your teeth will ache. You can take **pain relief** like paracetamol, whatever you would normally take for a headache. It is a good idea to eat **soft food** for the first 24 to 48 hours.

You may experience soreness of the gums, or lips, due to the brackets rubbing. You can use a small piece of **orthodontic wax** as a cushion which should ease the discomfort. This also applies if wire is sticking out at the back of the brace.

You can expect to have an aching feeling after every time you visit us, but not for long. This is due to us changing the wires to activate the brace, but it will get easier.

How to clean my teeth with my brace in place?

You will need to spend more time on cleaning, this is extremely important!

We want you to have straight, healthy teeth!

You must brush at least **twice a day**, with a **fluoride toothpaste**, for at least **two minutes**, or as long as it will take you to clean effectively. You can use a handheld brush or an electric brush, whichever one you prefer. Try using the Bass technique. This is where you angle the bristles of the tooth brush 45



degrees to the gums. Always brush methodically, working your way from one side of the mouth to the other, or start at the back and work your way forward. Definitely brush before you go to bed, **spit and do not rinse** out the toothpaste. This will allow Fluoride to remain on the tooth surface, to help harden the tooth enamel. Don't forget to pull your lips out of the way when

brushing your teeth and to get to your gums!

The use of **disclosing tablets** is a very good way to check that you are brushing your teeth and gums well. These can be bought at your local supermarket or chemist. Maybe once a month, after brushing, chew a disclosing tablet, swish

around the mouth, then spit out. Look in a mirror, any area that you may be missing with your toothbrush will be highlighted.

When brushing teeth in the morning, if you have had a drink of fruit juice, please allow 30 minutes after drinking before brushing. Fruit juice is acidic, you will need time for the saliva to neutralise the mouth.

You must use small, **interdental brushes** to clean under the wire & between each bracket, making sure to clean all four sides of the brackets. Ideally after every meal but if this is not possible use the interdental brushes as often as you can.

You could also use a **concentrated fluoride, daily mouthwash**, with **255ppm** or **0.05% fluoride**. This is the recommended amount of fluoride. Please use this at a **different time** to your **tooth brushing**. You could use the mouthwash at lunchtime, to wash away any food debris that maybe caught around your brace.



What can I live on?! What can I eat & drink?

Obviously a good, healthy, balanced diet is important. Ideally stick to three meals a day, try to **avoid snacking between meals!**

Avoid sugary foods & drinks. Sugar attacks the teeth, which will cause decay! Everything we eat has some form of sugar, so even three meals a day is three attacks on your teeth a day, without snacks.

Fizzy drinks & fruit juices are acidic and will dissolve your teeth! If you do drink these drinks, limit them to meal times, or drink with a straw. **Water is the best!**

Avoid foods that are hard or sticky or crunchy.

Cut up fruit and vegetables. For example, you will need to cut up apples into small pieces, otherwise you are at risk of breaking wires, or knocking off



brackets! Foods that are hard and sticky, for example crusty bread, pizza crust, boiled sweets, chocolate, jelly sweets and toffees, all need to be avoided.

You can have sugar free chewing gum, as long as it is the soft strips, not the tablet sort.

What happens if I break my Brace?

Breakages can occur more often at the beginning of treatment. If your next appointment is in the following week or two and you are not in pain, you should be able to wait until your appointment. But, if necessary contact our Orthodontic Reception **01225 824260**.

Every breakage will extend your treatment by approximately two months, if you are unsure whether you need to come and see us, have a look at **The British Orthodontic Society website**, and use this QR Code.




This gives a flow chart that will help you decide if you have an emergency or if you can manage it by yourself, we will then see you at your next routine appointment.

It is very important to continue to have **check-ups** with your **regular dentist**, so your teeth can be checked for decay and gum disease.

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All this time and effort will be worthwhile,

Remember this is the start of your perfect life time smile!



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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.

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