

Eating With Orthodontic Appliances

Although some patients are able to eat or drink anything while in braces and have no detrimental effects, there are certain dietary habits that are known to cause breakage of orthodontic appliances as well as increasing the risk of dental disease. Our aim is to achieve the treatment goals with as few disturbances as possible and minimize the side effects of poor diet choices. Remember, teeth move their best in a healthy environment and in individuals with excellent overall health. Be sure you have a well balanced diet from each of the four food groups.

Potential Harm to Your Teeth and Gums

Foods and drinks that may cause cavities should be restricted while wearing braces. Sticky foods are to be avoided because of the increased risk of dental decay and appliance breakage. These foods stick to your braces and remain on your teeth for long periods of time. If foods or drinks high in sugar content are to be consumed, we advise having them at regular meals or at one given time of day. Please make sure that careful brushing and rinsing take place immediately afterwards. **Between meal snacks should be confined to foods without refined sugar and should be followed by a vigorous rinsing if a toothbrush is not available.**

The following foods can be particularly harmful to your teeth while wearing braces:

Taffy and Caramels

Soda

Sugar on Cereal or Icing on Rolls or Cakes

Syrup and Honey on Pancakes and Waffles

Lemons (citric acid in juice can dissolve tooth enamel if eaten too frequently)

Potential Harm to Your Braces

Braces have been attached to your teeth with an adhesive, which normally will withstand the forces of eating. However, braces can be dislodged and wires bent or broken while eating certain foods. Hard foods such as nuts, hard candy, corn chips and even crisp taco shells can harm your braces should be avoided. Chewing ice cubes can also be very destructive to your appliances. Some foods such as apples, raw carrots, or celery are healthy snacks, but should be cut to avoid damaging your braces. Chewy foods such as gum, caramels, and even thick bread crusts can bend and distort wires causing treatment delays and extra visits for repairs. Popcorn can cause harm in multiple ways. Please inspect your braces when eating certain foods that may become caught on the braces or beneath the gums.

Remember if you have any questions about dietary restrictions, PLEASE ASK!!!