



## *General Instructions Regarding Orthodontic Appliances*

### I. Eating Habits

A. We know you love these, but please avoid the following foods due to the risk of breakage to brackets, wires and appliances:

1. Hard foods, such as: candy bars, lollipops, nuts, peanut brittle, ice cubes, hard, crusty breads, etc.

2. Sticky foods such as: taffy, caramels, gum, Tootsie Rolls, Skittles, Starburst, Air Heads, Blow Pops, Twizzlers, Swedish Fish, Shock Tarts, Gummi Bears or worms, toffee, jelly beans, Sour Patch Kids and Jolly Ranchers.

3. Popcorn should not be eaten with braces. Popcorn hulls can get lodged under your gum tissue. This can cause gum irritations and even infections.

4. Soda/Soft drinks should be eliminated or drastically reduced. The acid and sugar in soda accelerates tooth decay and decalcification spots around braces.  
Miscellaneous: pizza crust, lemons, and corn chips

5. Foods high in sugar content should be avoided. Foods high in sugar will increased the risk of tooth decay during orthodontic treatment.

B. Please avoid biting into hard foods such as: carrots, apples, celery, sub sandwiches, and bagels. These should be cut into **SMALL** pieces and chewed on the back teeth.

Cut the corn off corn on the cob and cut chicken off the bones.

Please do not chew on pencils or pen caps.

Peanut butter is okay to eat with braces as long as it is creamy, not crunchy.

Use common sense when eating: if it's too big or too hard it can cause damage to your braces.

### II. Patient Cooperation

Patients/Parents will be informed if there is evidence of lack of cooperation with:

Proper oral hygiene

Not wearing headgear

Not wearing elastics

If you have any questions in regards to case progress or treatment, feel free to ask questions at any time.

### III. Hygiene and Maintenance

A. Thorough tooth brushing after every meal and before bedtime is very important! Pay extra attention to brush thoroughly along the gumline. Electric toothbrushes work very well with braces. Loose bands, poor oral hygiene and a diet high in sugars can cause white spots, known as decalcification. These marks are permanent scars on the teeth.

B. Prevident 5000 toothpaste- patients should use this fluoride boosting toothpaste everyday to minimize the risk of decay and white spots during treatment. Your first bottle is complimentary; should you need more, it is available at the front desk for purchase.

#### *Prevident 5000 Instructions:*

Place a pea-size amount of Prevident toothpaste on your toothbrush and brush all surfaces of your teeth for 3 minutes. Then spit out the excess and do not swallow it. If you are under the age of 16 please rinse quickly. After use of this toothpaste, do not eat or drink anything for 30 minutes. Instructions may be found on the bottle.

C. Proxabrush: this tree-shaped brush is to be used to clean the tooth surface under the wire. Use it everyday! If you need more brush heads, they can be purchased at CVS, Walmart, etc, in the tooth brushing section.

D. Flossing: Flossing is important for gum tissue and tooth health. We know it is hard to floss with braces on, try flossing in the evening when you have more time. Please use flossing aids such as threader floss, floss threaders or the Platypus flosser. We will provide samples of these aids.

Please check appliances daily for loose bands, wires, or brackets. If a bracket is off or a wire is out or broken, do not wait until your next appointment to tell us. Call as soon as you find something loose. If you come in with loose brackets, we will have to schedule a separate repair appointment.

*Excessive broken brackets or wires can extend your treatment!*

#### IV. Orthodontic Appliances

The following is a diagram of orthodontic appliances. It will help you to identify the different parts of your braces. When calling in reference to problems with your braces, try to use the appropriate term for the part of the appliance you are concerned about. This way we can better help you.

QuickTime™ and a  
decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

Bonded brackets- Are bonded to the enamel of the teeth using a special adhesive.

*Note: Damon System appliance brackets have a door that holds the wire in the bracket.*

Archwires- These act as a guide or track along which the teeth are to be moved. They are reshaped and changed during treatment.

Bands- These are thin rings of metal, carefully fitted to the tooth and then cemented in place. They have tubes and brackets welded on them to help us move and control the tooth.

Elastics or Rubber bands-these provide force to help the upper and lower teeth bite together better.

Elastic Tie -Tiny rubber band that fits around the bracket to hold the archwire in place.

Coil Spring -Fits between brackets and over archwire to open space between teeth.

Tie Wire -Fine wire that is twisted around the bracket to hold the archwire in place.

Hook -Welded or removable arm to which elastics (rubber bands) are attached

## V. Pain and Discomfort

A. You may experience some discomfort during the first 2-4 days after the initial bonding appointment. After future adjustment visits the discomfort should last only 1-2 days.

You may take ibuprofen (Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) as needed until the discomfort lessens.

B. Your inner cheek and lips may become irritated by the braces. These areas will gradually become used to the orthodontic appliances in 7-10 days. Use softened wax to cover any area of the braces that are causing irritation. Wax will be provided at the office and is available at pharmacies if you run out and need some over a weekend. Salt-water rinses are also good way to soothe these sores.

## VI. Emergencies

There are few emergencies that require immediate attention by the orthodontist. Most emergencies are of a simple nature and can be remedied in the following ways:

- A. Something is sharp and sticking out: try to push the wires in with a pencil eraser, but don't force it. You can also apply wax to the area. Call the office for an appointment if the end of the archwire is sticking into the cheek.
- B. Something comes loose or completely off tooth: Leave the bracket or band off, and call the office right away for an appointment. Any bands or brackets that come off should be saved and brought in to the office to be rebonded.
- C. Removable appliances (headgear, retainer, etc.) that are bent, distorted or broken: Do not wear. Call the office for an appointment as soon as possible.
- D. Call for an immediate orthodontic appointment if:
  - A wire is embedded in the gum tissue
  - An appliance is causing a large ulceration in the tissue
  - The gums are very red, bleeding, swelling up around the band or wire
  - (Call Dr. Parker at the office or at home for emergencies of this type, even on the weekend)
  - *An excellent source for information on orthodontic emergencies and other problems is provided by the American Association of Orthodontists. Please visit them on the web at- <http://www.braces.org/knowmore/breaks/>*