

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR BRACES

Congratulations, you now have braces! At the end of this journey, you will benefit from a great smile and an improved bite relationship. In order to arrive safely at our final destination, there are some important things to keep in mind:

1. Please keep your teeth and orthodontic appliances CLEAN. Brushing for at least **three minutes**, rinsing thoroughly after every meal, flossing and using the proxabrush or finer cleaning devices before bedtime are essential. Keep working until there is **no** plaque or food on your teeth, braces and bands. Consistently clean teeth will prevent white spots and cavities from occurring.
2. Take care of your appliances. A pattern of loose brackets, bands or wires can lead to increased treatment time and inefficient tooth movement. The following foods should be avoided:
  - a. **Sticky foods** – chewing gum, taffy, caramel, licorice, gummy candy
  - b. **Hard foods** – ice, pretzels, popcorn kernels, hard pizza crust, meat on bones, hard candy or lollipops
  - c. **Soda and other soft drinks** – high acid content of regular and diet soft drinks, high sugar content in Gatorade and many juices can lead to white spots and cavities around the braces
3. The mouth is very sensitive. There may be periods of discomfort from time to time during orthodontic treatment as the teeth move. These typically do not last more than a couple of days at a time and if necessary can be alleviated by small doses of over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol.
4. Wires and braces can be abrasive to lips, cheeks and tongues – this is entirely normal. Use the wax provided by LOA and please know that these discomforts get better with time as your body naturally develops calluses in the areas of irritation during the adjustment period.
5. Loose appliances are not considered to be an emergency. Please call during normal business hours as soon as you are aware of a loose appliance so we can get you into our schedule with the appropriate amount of time. Bring any loose appliances in a small bag as some appliances are customized and can be cleaned and re-used.
6. Fluoride: We recommend a fluoride rinse to be used nightly during orthodontic treatment. You will receive a coupon for Colgate Phos-Flur rinse at your initial appointment. We also place a fluoride varnish on teeth in cases where we feel added protection for the enamel is necessary. Finally, it is essential to use toothpaste that contains fluoride. Children under the age of 12 should not swallow any fluoride containing products.