



*Ocean Orthodontic Clinic*  
*You Smile. We Smile.*

## Taking Care Of Your Fixed Appliance

Well done, you have just had your braces fitted! To keep your teeth clean and healthy, avoid breakages, and to minimise your treatment time, you must follow these simple instructions.

### Keeping your teeth clean and healthy

- Brush your teeth at least TWICE daily for 3-4 minutes (as demonstrated by the nurse)
- Remember, it is just as important to brush your gums as it is your teeth.
- Use the recommended “Tepe” brush when you clean your teeth
- Use an Alcohol Free Fluoride mouthwash twice daily and do not rinse with water afterwards, ideally use the mouthwash at a separate time to when you brush.
- Disclosing tablets should be used every week until your next appointment and thereafter 2- 3 times a month to maintain good brushing.

All of the above must be carried out to maintain a good level of oral hygiene. Failure to keep your teeth clean can cause scarring to the teeth, called decalcification. These marks are permanent and cannot be removed. If you notice any changes in the appearance of your gums, ie. they become red or swollen, or if they bleed when brushing, it is because the brushing has not been thorough enough and they have become inflamed. Extra care, attention and thorough cleaning should reduce this inflammation and within a couple of weeks the bleeding should stop. If you are concerned, speak to a clinician or nurse; we are always happy to help. We will constantly monitor your oral hygiene throughout treatment. If you do not keep your fixed braces clean enough, we cannot move onto the next stage of treatment, which will increase your treatment time. If oral hygiene is persistently poor, it may be necessary to abandon treatment before completion, as we will not risk the health of your teeth. Note that your orthodontic appointments do not replace your general dental appointments. It is important to continue your routine appointments with your dentist, who is responsible for your non-orthodontic care.

### Looking After Your Fixed Appliance

- No hard, crunchy or sticky foods, for example, chocolate, sweets, biscuits or crusty bread.
- Fruit and vegetables can be eaten; cut into small pieces and peel where necessary.
- You will not be able to bite directly into foods; break or cut up into bite size pieces. ● Take your time when eating and chew on your back teeth
- Stick to a low sugar diet and avoid fizzy drinks
- Avoid biting nails, pen tops, pencils.
- Do not open water bottles with your teeth; the plastic caps will break the braces.
- If you play contact sports you will need an orthodontic mouth guard. These are available to buy at reception. Please be aware that if you do not carry out the above advice you will

break your brace, which means your treatment will take longer and it will be difficult to achieve a good result. Multiple breakages may result in your treatment being discontinued.

## Problems With Your Brace

Braces can be quite uncomfortable when fitted, but after a few days you will get used to them and the discomfort soon disappears. We recommend a soft diet for the first few days and, where necessary, take whatever medication you normally would for a headache. If you experience any soreness in the mouth from the brackets rubbing, please apply relief wax (as demonstrated by the nurse). If you experience any other problems with your brace, you can call reception; please be specific and tell them exactly what the problem is.

- **Bracket off** – If you break a bracket on your brace, it is not classed as an ‘emergency’ appointment, as it should not cause you any discomfort. If we can fit you in we will, but you may have to wait until your next appointment. Please bring your bracket with you.
- **Wire out** – If your wire slides out of the ‘buccal tube’ at the back and is causing you discomfort, you can try pushing the wire back in with your finger. If it is still uncomfortable, please contact the practice. However, if you are not in any discomfort, you may need to wait until your next appointment.
- **Turbo (bite block) off** – If you grind your bite blocks down on your teeth, or one comes off and you are in discomfort, or can feel yourself biting onto any brackets, please contact reception. If it is not causing you a problem, you can wait until your next scheduled appointment. Please note that extreme dental pain is not normal; if this is experienced please contact us or your general dentist.

## Elastics

It may be necessary at some point in your treatment to attach delicate elastic bands to your fixed brace to help move the teeth. Elastics must be worn ALL of the time, unless otherwise stated by the clinician. If they are not worn exactly as instructed they will not work and this will extend your treatment time. If you run out of your elastics please pop into reception to pick some up.

## Know Your Brace

Everyone’s teeth are different, therefore your braces will be slightly different too. Here is a picture to give you some idea of the different aspects of a brace.

A = Bracket: the metal square glued to the tooth.

B = Arch wire: the wire that runs in between the brackets

C = Elastic Modules: these are not on all braces; they hold the wire in the bracket slot

D = Band: not all braces have metal bands. They fit around the back teeth to hold the tube on the tooth.

E = Buccal tube with hook + elastic attachment the brackets on the back teeth that have hooks on them which your elastics attach to.

