

Bencivengo & Ko, D.M.D., P.C.
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(860) 582-8095

Orthodontic Instructions

We are here to not only give you a great smile, but also to keep you comfortable. If you or your child is uncomfortable and you cannot correct the problem yourself, please call our office at (860) 582-8095.

Initial Soreness

After the initial placement of braces or following an adjustment, the teeth may be tender for a couple of days. This occasionally happens and will pass. An over the counter pain reliever such as Advil or Tylenol may be helpful in alleviating this initial soreness. Rinsing your mouth with a teaspoon of salt dissolved in a glass of warm water can also be soothing.

Lost Spacer

If a rubber spacer falls out, take two pieces of dental floss and insert them through the spacer. Then, pull on both pieces of floss to stretch the spacer back and forth between the two teeth where it belongs. When the bottom half of the spacer slips under the tight spot between the teeth, release and remove the floss. The spacer should now be back in place.

Wire Poking

If the main wire has come out of the tube on the back molar tooth, you may attempt to reinsert the wire with a pair of needle-nosed pliers or tweezers. If you are having a difficult time and the wire is not poking you, place a piece of wax over the area. If the wire is poking you and wax does not help, the wire can be cut with a small wire cutter or toenail clipper close to the back of the last brace.

Broken Bracket

If a bracket (the small rectangular brace) is loose, it usually will remain connected to the main wire by a little rubber ring that is often colored. You may use a pair of tweezers to reposition the brace if it flips around the wire and becomes a source of irritation. Please let our office know you have a loose bracket, so we can be prepared at your next visit to repair the bracket. If you have an appliance that happens to come off, please do not discard it! Bring it with you to your next appointment so that we can repair or replace it.

Broken Wire

If the main wire breaks, take a pair of nail clippers and cut the wire as close as possible to the next bracket it is attached to. You may also need to place wax over the cut end of the wire. Please call our office so we can schedule an appointment to repair the wire.

Poking Wire Tie

Sometimes to secure the bracket to the wire, we twist a very small stainless steel ligature around it. Infrequently, it is possible for the twisted end of the ligature to move and start to feel sharp. If this happens, simply use the eraser end of a pencil or a Q-tip to gently push it into a comfortable position.

Lost or Broken Retainer

If you lose or break a removable appliance or retainer, please call our office so we can schedule an appointment to repair or replace the appliance or retainer.

Toothbrushing and Cavity Control

Both cavities and gum disease are caused by slimy film we call plaque accumulation on the teeth and gums. The plaque is made of millions of germs called bacteria. The plaque must be removed everyday to prevent cavities and white etching lines from development around your braces. This can be done best with the following proper brushing and flossing methods:

Teeth should be brushed at least twice a day (you must brush in the morning and before bed), but preferably brush after every meal. We recommend using a soft-bristle brush. Let your brush air dry 24 hours before using again. This means having at least 2 toothbrushes. Brush first with water to allow better visibility, then toothpaste can be used to a fresher taste. Proper brushing should take 3-5 minutes, so don't rush it. Always start at the upper left and work to the upper right; then brush the lower right and finish with the lower left. The goal is to not miss any areas, so establish a pattern. Scrub only 2 to 3 teeth at a time. Place the bristles on the tooth between the braces and gum. Concentrate on cleaning the edges of the gums with gentle pressure. This is the most important area to keep clean so you can avoid cavities and puffy gums.

Stronger brushing pressures are necessary to properly clean the teeth around the braces. After cleaning the teeth, force the bristles of the brush between the wire and the braces; again, with a scrubbing motion, clean under the wire 1 to 2 teeth at a time. Now, thoroughly brush the chewing surfaces and tongue side of each tooth. Brush your tongue! The plaque also collects on your tongue and is the major cause of bad breath. Brushing your tongue will give you fresher breath.

Flossing will remove the plaque that accumulates between your teeth. This takes considerable time, and we want you to master brushing. Please ask us and we will show you how to floss when you feel ready.

After brushing, look into the mirror. If your teeth look dirty, brush again!

Avoid ALL hard, sticky, or chewy foods such as:

Ice, pizza crust, hard pretzels, Doritos, hard tacos, Cheetos, Fritos, caramel candy, bubble gum, hard rolls, bagels, beef jerky, Slim Jims, ribs, popcorn, raw carrots, nuts, etc.

Eating these foods will loosen the braces, but you may not discover the problem until hours or days later ... surprise! Loose bands, broken wires, and detached brackets cause a longer treatment time.