

## Patient Information Leaflet- Fixed Brace

Now that you have had your brace fitted, you need to know how to care for it. Your teeth may ache for the first few days. If you find it too uncomfortable, you may take painkillers for relief. Be sure to follow the packet instructions and do not exceed the stated dose.

- If you break your brace, the treatment will take longer. To avoid breaking your brace, you need to think about what you are putting into your mouth. For instance, do not bite your nails, chew the tops of pens or open packets or bottles with your teeth.
- Avoid biting into hard foods such as chocolate bars, ice lollies, crusty bread, popcorn, hard fruits or vegetables. Ensure that you cut or tear your food into small pieces. Avoid chewy products such as chewing gum, toffees or sticky sweets. Too much sugary food and fizzy drinks can cause damage to the enamel of the teeth leading to tooth decay. It is very important that these are kept to an absolute minimum. This list is not comprehensive and just an example of things that will break your brace or damage your teeth. It is best to avoid anything hard, crunchy, chewy or sweet.
- Get into the habit of checking your brace in the mirror every day. If you notice that something is broken, contact the practice as soon as possible. If you already have an appointment coming up soon, let us know of the breakage prior to visiting the practice so that we can allow extra time to repair it or re-book you a longer appointment if required.
- You must keep your teeth, brace and gums clean; food and plaque will collect around the brackets and this must be removed to prevent decay and gum disease. Look in the mirror when you brush your teeth and hold your lips out of the way to ensure you brush where your teeth and gums meet. If you do not clean your teeth and gums properly and regularly, plaque accumulates around the gums causing them to become red, puffy and bleed. Inflamed gums stop your teeth moving and cause bad breath.
- As well as using a toothbrush, you will need to use an inter-dental brush to clean in between the teeth and under the wires. On your upper teeth, insert the brush from your gums downwards and on your lower teeth, use the brush from your gums upwards in order to remove any plaque around your gums.
- A fluoride mouthwash is recommended to help strengthen the enamel. Disclosing tablets can aid cleaning by showing up the areas you have missed. Carefully suck one in your mouth and areas that have not been cleaned properly will show up a vivid colour. Keep a travel toothbrush handy for when you eat out.
- If the brackets are rubbing against your lips or cheeks, use the relief wax. Break off a small piece of wax and soften it between your finger and thumb, dry the part of the brace causing the problem with a tissue, and place the wax onto the bracket or wire. Replace, as necessary.
- If you participate in any head contact sports, mouth guards for brace wearers are available for purchase from the Reception Desk. Brace care starter packs are also available at £13.50.
- It is essential that you continue to see your own dentist regularly during orthodontic treatment.

***Products such as mouth wash, interdental and orthodontic brushes, wax, travel brushes, retainer brite, mouth guards etc. are available to purchase at the Practice. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. Orthodontic care instruction videos are also available our website.***