

When Can I Eat After I Get My Braces?

The adhesive used for attaching the braces to your teeth cures rapidly initially, but takes 24-hours to completely cure. You can eat anytime after leaving our office. However, we ask that you be mindful of the suggested list of foods that may be harmful to the braces. Until you become accustomed to eating with your new braces, you may find it beneficial to follow a diet consisting of soft foods.

Minor Pain And Discomfort

Initially the braces feel like they stick out. This is normal. As you become accustomed to your braces and your tooth alignment improves, this sensation will disappear and will cease to be a concern. Although the brackets have been rounded and smoothed, you may find it helpful to use a small piece of dental wax around a bracket that is creating irritation. You may notice some discomfort beginning a few hours after your braces are placed. Some teeth, usually the front teeth, may be tender and sensitive to pressure. Occasionally, patients report they experience no discomfort, but most have some soreness during the first eight hours, dissipating within the week. You may wish to take non-prescription pain remedies commonly taken for other discomforts such as headaches. For maximum effectiveness, it may be best to take such medications before the discomfort begins.

How To Minimize Discomfort

Before leaving the office, there are routine steps that we ask you complete prior to leaving. These steps will minimize discomfort related to irritation from the braces and ensure an optimal response to treatment. Please make these steps a part of each office visit:

- ◆ Using your finger and tongue, check to see that the wire ends do not extend into areas that might poke or abrade the cheek or tongue.
- ◆ Make sure you understand what you are to do until your next appointment. This could include wearing elastics as instructed, adjusting an expander or following specific hygiene and diet instructions.
- ◆ Make sure you have an adequate supply of dental wax, special cleaning aids, elastic bands, or other related materials you may need between appointments.
- ◆ Always schedule your next appointment before leaving the office. Waiting 1-2 weeks after an appointment before scheduling your next office visit complicates the scheduling process, since appointments are programmed 6-8 weeks in advance. Postponing appointments is a common contributor to overtime treatment.

Orthodontic Repairs

Although there are very few true orthodontic emergencies, during the course of treatment you may discover that you have loose or broken bracket or that the orthodontic wires may shift and begin irritating your lips or cheeks.

If something is broken AND bothering you, patients are encouraged to contact our office during working hours. Repair appointments seen during office hours are given the next available appointment. If a bracket is broken but not bothering you, we are happy to repair it at your next scheduled visit. This will not delay orthodontic treatment but rather will save you an unnecessary trip to our office. **If you do experience a true orthodontic emergency after hours you can call or text 903-212-7737, & we can assist you as needed. Please leave a voicemail if you decide to call.**

Below is a list of common problems and how they may be remedied at home. If you have a problem that you cannot resolve on your own, please call our office. Our orthodontic team will be able to give you advice on how to solve the problem yourself or schedule you the appropriate appointment so that the problem can be fixed.

- ◆ **Tooth Soreness:** Soreness will occur off and on during orthodontic treatment. Tylenol or Ibuprofen will help. Also, try to stick to softer foods during this time.
- ◆ **Traumatic Accidents:** Use ice immediately to reduce swelling. If the teeth are displaced and don't fit together properly, arch wires are bent, or soft tissue is stuck in the braces, call our office to schedule an appointment immediately.
- ◆ **Loose Teeth:** Loosening is common, as teeth must loosen before they can move. They will tighten following appliance removal.
- ◆ **Irritated Cheeks, Lips, or Tongue:** Brackets may irritate soft tissues initially until the tissue toughens (as hands callous). Soft wax will ease the discomfort as does a warm salt water rinse.
- ◆ **Infection:** If an area becomes irritated enough to form a sore or blister, and that area is not kept clean, an oral infection could occur. If you notice signs or symptoms of infection including drainage, bad taste or odor, or especially swelling or fever, please contact our office or another medical professional as soon as possible to prevent the spread of an infection.

Problem	Solution
Loose Band or Bracket	If band or bracket is still attached to wire, leave in place. If uncomfortable, place wax on it. If it comes out completely, wrap brace or bracket in a tissue
Loose Wire	Try to place wire back in place with tweezers. If that is not possible, clip wire with fingernail clippers behind last tooth which it is securely fastened. If any discomfort, place wax on it
Poking Wire	Try to push sticking wire down with a spoon or eraser. If not possible, place wax on it
Lost Elastic Tie	Notify us at your next appointment
Soreness	Use warm salt water rinses and/or Tylenol or Ibuprofen
Loose Appliance	If appliance is sticking or poking, place wax on it

More information regarding oral hygiene and care during your treatment is available on our website at www.etxortho.com or you can contact our office at 903-212-7737.