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Dentistry For The Entire Family
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Instructions for Care of Fixed Orthodontic Appliances and/or Braces

1. Some initial discomfort is normal. Please call our office immediately if severe discomfort is noticed, as hesitation can prolong treatment. Do not attempt to "fix it" yourself. Wax supplied by our office can be applied over the braces to help reduce soft tissue irritation to the cheeks and tongue. You can also apply some Orabase® for pain relief. Sometimes a tie wire can get loose and poke the inside of your mouth. When that happens, gently tuck the wire back into place under the archwire with a blunt object such as a popsicle stick. If it does not stay cover it with a piece of wax until the orthodontist can see you.
2. Special care must be taken to eliminate certain foods from the diet as they may bend the wires or loosen the bands and brackets. It's absolutely essential that you avoid eating crunchy foods like ice, popcorn, nuts, or corn chips. Hard foods like raw fruits and vegetables which includes carrots and apples should be cut into bite-sized pieces before they are eaten. Sticky foods should be avoided as well, which includes gum, taffy, and caramels. You should also cut down on sugary foods and carbonated soft drinks. Whenever you do have something sweet, brush your teeth immediately afterwards.
3. Brush thoroughly after each meal, for at least two minutes. Brackets, wires, and loose bands can trap food particles and make it difficult to brush away plaque, the layer of harmful bacteria that attack your teeth and gums. Brush the gum line around the bands, wires, or braces. If you fail to get the teeth clean and stimulate the gums, the gums swell and make it more difficult to clean as well as achieve tooth movement. Continued neglect of these areas may result in bad breath, tooth decay, decalcification areas (white spots), or even a disruption in treatment. It is also important that you floss. Flossing can be a bit tricky for braces wearers at first, but by using floss threaders you can easily get under the archwire.
4. The patient or parent should check periodically for loose bands on appliances, and/or loose braces by attempting to gently move them with a fingernail. If bands or brackets become loose or wires broken, call for an emergency orthodontic appointment. **** MAKE SURE TO KEEP ANY BANDS, BRACKETS, WIRES, OR ANY OTHER ORTHODONTIC APPLIANCE THAT COMES OFF. THE FIRST REPLACEMENT FOR LOST BANDS AND/OR BRACKETS IS FREE. THERE WILL BE AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF \$10.00 EACH TIME THERE AFTER.**
5. Do not pick at the appliance wires, bands, and/or braces with the fingers.
6. With the new appliance there may be initial difficulty with speech, which should disappear in a few days as your mouth becomes adjusted.
7. Remember all patients with fixed appliances and/or braces must be seen on a routine basis for re-evaluation of the bite and fit. Don't forget to bring your appliance to every appointment!
8. **USE YOUR GEL-KAM DAILY!!!!** If you need more please contact our office, it is included in orthodontic treatment.