

Information for the Orthodontic Patient and Family

In order to obtain the best results, much depends on the wholehearted and sincere cooperation of the patient during orthodontic treatment.

The diet during treatment should be well balanced, consisting of vitamin-rich foods, fresh fruit and fruit juices, fresh vegetables and proteins so that the health of the gum tissue may be maintained. The diet should have a low sugar content, which will help prevent decay while the orthodontic appliances are in place. Hard, sticky, chewy foods should be avoided. These foods are harmful because they bend and damage the appliances and therefore extend the treatment time.

The teeth and appliances must be kept clean at all times and should be brushed immediately after each meal and before bed. Orthodontic treatment does not cause decay, but the appliances accumulate food, so special care is required. The portion of the teeth between the brackets and the gums should receive particular attention to prevent decalcification (permanent white scars on the teeth). Cleanliness of teeth cannot be overemphasized. We recommend using a fluoride mouth rinse (ACT) once a day, preferably before bed and flossing at least once a day.

If any orthodontic appliance becomes loose or broken, or in case of an injury to the mouth, call the office immediately for an appointment. The appliance mechanism is very finely adjusted and under control will move the teeth slowly and efficiently to their desired positions. The patient's care of the appliances and cooperation in following instructions can affect results obtained in treatment. **Loose/broken appliances, missed appointments, and failure to follow instructions will result in extended treatment time and additional appointments.** If something is loose, please call the office immediately. We will try to expand the existing appointment or to schedule an appointment sooner to repair the breakage. Maintaining the appliances in good condition will help us minimize your time missed from school or work.

Appointments for regular adjustments are scheduled approximately every 6 weeks and each appointment lasts about 30–45 minutes. Longer appointments, such as those to place or remove appliances are infrequent and will be made during the morning. During the school year, we will make every effort to schedule regular adjustment appointments in the afternoon. These after-school appointments are considered to be a

privilege. Patients who maintain their appliances, show good hygiene, and are on time for their appointments may continue to schedule appointments during the afternoon. If you miss an appointment or cancel it with less than 24 hours notice, you will be given lower priority to schedule regular checkups during the afternoon.

If you have to cancel an appointment, please give the office at least 24 hours notice. We may not be able to reschedule you for several weeks depending on the schedule, so it is best not to cancel appointments. Failure to maintain appointments will extend the treatment time. In order to protect our staff and other patients from contagious diseases, we prefer not to treat patients who are sick or have a fever; we ask that their appointment be rescheduled.

Please inform the office if there is any change in the medical or dental history of the patient, new medication being taken on a regular basis, or new allergies to medications. We also request that you update any address or home/work phone number changes.

Regular periodic examination and cleaning appointments by the patient's dentist every 6 months should be continued during orthodontic treatment.