



*creating beautiful smiles
& harmonious bites*

Fixed Appliances

Congratulations, you have taken the first step towards an improved smile and bite! The appliances you have been given today are **fixed appliances ('braces')**. They should only be adjusted or removed by the Orthodontist. If you look after your braces and follow the instructions given to you, they will work efficiently without causing damage to your teeth. On average braces take 18 months to 2 years to work, but certain cases may be shorter or longer, depending on your malocclusion and compliance with instructions.

How do I clean my teeth?

It is important to have excellent oral hygiene including good tooth-brushing and flossing during the entire duration of your treatment. You have been shown how to brush and floss correctly around the brackets. Orthodontic Toothbrushes are different from standard toothbrushes. If you have trouble using 'regular floss' between the tooth contact points you may purchase Oral-B SuperFloss® or other recommended equivalent product. Please also use Interdental Brushes under the wire-work and around the brackets to remove debris. You must clean your teeth, gums, wires and brackets. Brushing should be at least twice a day, but preferably after every meal or snack. If your brushing is poor, then plaque around the teeth and braces will lead to tooth demineralisation/discolouration, decay and bleeding gums. Damage to the tooth surface is permanent. You must continue to see your general dentist at least every 6 months for a check-up and professional clean.

Fluoride Mouth rinse

A daily fluoride mouth rinse can be used after tooth-brushing (but not as a substitute for brushing). This can be an additional help to prevent certain dental problems during treatment. Fluoride mouth rinses can be purchased from any pharmacy.

What can I eat?

Sweets, sticky foods, fizzy drinks and constant sipping on fruit juices should be avoided, as they contain sugar and/or acids that will damage your teeth. You should also avoid all hard and chewy foods because these can cause the braces to break and slow your treatment down. Foods should be eaten in small bite size pieces towards the back of the mouth.

Are braces painful?

The vast majority of patients cope extremely well with modern braces and orthodontic appliances. However, when the braces are fitted and after each adjustment some patients may feel minor discomfort for a few days, as the teeth start to move. This will normally settle by a week. Chewing sugar-free gum may increase the comfort level following adjustments. You may take analgesics/'pain-tablets', e.g. Panadol® or Neurofen® (unless your medical history avoids the use of these). Please carefully follow instructions on the packet for any medication or seek advice from your general medical doctor if you are unsure or have a history of adverse/allergic reactions.





Why do my teeth feel 'loose'?

As your teeth begin to move you may experience different sensations. Sometimes you may become aware of teeth feeling more 'wobbly'. Slight tooth mobility is normal as the bone around moving teeth re-models into a new position. However, please advise us if the mobility is more significant.

Why is it more difficult for me to bite down?

Your 'bite' and 'teeth' are moving in order to make correction. During the course of orthodontics your bite may feel dramatically different, however please be reassured that your bite will be corrected to 'fit' together by the completion of treatment.

Using wax

You have been given some Orthodontic Wax. You can roll this in your fingers and push it over any of the brackets or wires that rub your cheeks and lips causing discomfort.

If the 'wire ends' have accidentally come out of the 'tunnels/tubes' on the back teeth, please use your fingers/tweezers to feed the thin wire back through (this will not continue to be a problem once 'larger' dimension wires are used further into treatment). If you cannot push the wires back and they are 'poking' your cheeks then, as an emergency measure, use clean nail-clippers or sterile wire cutters to cut off the free wire end for immediate comfort.

If any part of your brace becomes loose or damaged, please contact Dr Elaine Lim or staff immediately, so that the appropriate advice can be given and appointments made for any necessary adjustments/repairs.

Metal Bracket

Ceramic Bracket

Tube



Archwire upper
and lower

Module (elastic tie around bracket and archwire)

Bracket Hook

Figure 1: The above picture and names are to assist you to describe any concerns you are having over the phone.

If you have any concerns or questions please do not hesitate to contact us on ph: (03) 9576 9000

Limited Afterhours Urgent Contact text Dr Lim ph: 0407709987

Dental Emergencies call Royal Melbourne Dental Hospital ph: (03) 9341 1000

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