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Looking after your braces

Orthodontics and Restorative Dentistry
Information for Patients

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Introduction

This leaflet is for patients who have recently had braces fitted. Taking care of your braces is important for straightening your teeth.

Why look after your braces

Orthodontic treatment is a way of straightening or moving teeth, to improve the appearance of the teeth and how they work. This process can take longer if you do not look after your braces properly. Not looking after your braces can lead to damage to your braces. Damage to your braces can cause you:

- pain and discomfort.
- unwanted tooth movement and treatment may take longer.

Poor cleaning can lead to the development of unsightly white or brown marks or cavities on the fronts of the teeth around the brace.

If you fail to stick to the advice that can improve your oral hygiene or if your oral hygiene is poor, orthodontic treatment will need to be stopped.

How to look after your braces

Diet and braces

The brackets and wires that we use are fragile. Eating the wrong foods can break them. This can cause you pain and discomfort and or unwanted tooth movement.

Avoid hard, crunchy or sticky foods that could damage, break or dislodge the brace, for example:

- Raw apples
- Raw carrots
- Hard chocolate
- Corn on the cob
- Chewing gum
- Nuts
- Toffees, caramels or sweets
- Pizza crust
- Fried chicken on the bone and spare ribs

Choose foods which are softer such as:

- Soup
- Pasta or rice dishes
- Yoghurts
- Cheese
- Soft fruit or vegetables
- Lentil or noodle dishes

Avoid fizzy drinks during treatment as they can cause damage to your teeth.

Choose water between meals to prevent damage to teeth and gums.

The British Orthodontic Society has a brace friendly recipe booklet that can be downloaded from:

https://archive.bos.org.uk/NOWRecipebooklet

All food should be cut up small and eaten on the back teeth.

Cleaning

Keep your teeth and braces as clean as possible using a manual or electric toothbrush.

Tiny, tufted (interdental) brushes made to get into the small spaces between the teeth and plaque search tablets can also be used as needed. It is important to clean any food and plaque off your teeth and braces. This is to stop tooth decay and minimise the risk of developing unsightly marks or cavities on the fronts of teeth around the brackets.

Checking

Regularly check your braces and teeth to make sure nothing is broken.

You should also keep regular appointments with your own dentist to make sure your oral health stays as good as possible during brace treatment.

What to do if you have a problem with your braces

- Call the Orthodontic and Restorative Dentistry department on **0116 250 2648**.
- Explain the problem and ask for an appointment to have the braces fixed.
- It is important that we sort out any problems as soon as possible. If you do not, it will increase your treatment time.
- There may be a wait when you attend for urgent appointments as clinics are always busy with planned routine appointments.

Use orthodontic wax

Orthodontic wax (also called dental wax or braces wax) can sometimes help with discomfort. You will be given orthodontic wax when you visit the department. Place the orthodontic wax over the broken part of the brace to minimise discomfort before you can see the orthodontist.

Contact details:

For any more questions, please contact the Orthodontic and Restorative Dentistry department on **0116 250 2648**.

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice
Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals.
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہِ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

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જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો.

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead
or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email uhl-tr.equalitymailbox@nhs.net

We are a research hospital and you may be asked to take part in research

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