

# PETTY & DRAGSTREM

## ORTHODONTICS

how exciting!

Congratulations on the start of your path to a brand new smile! It will be a new and rewarding experience. Successful orthodontic treatment depends on your commitment to being a super orthodontic patient! This introductory page will give you a basic understanding and review of your responsibilities while in braces.

adapting to braces

As your teeth start straightening (Day 1!), it is normal for them to feel sore especially while chewing foods. Soreness typically lasts 3-7 days after braces are placed. Therefore soft foods for the first week can be helpful. Also Tylenol or Advil can be taken as directed if needed. The cheeks, lips, and tongue can also feel sore as they adjust to having braces in the mouth but they will toughen up after a few days. As you adapt to your braces, you will find you need fewer measures necessary to maintain your comfort. Please call if you have any undue discomfort.

what to expect

Appointments will be spaced out every 4-8 weeks. Most appointments are about 15-20 minutes and can be scheduled before, during, and after school. About halfway through your treatment we will schedule a slightly longer appointment to reposition any braces where teeth are not aligning as they should. This appointment is typically during the day so that you have more uninterrupted time with the doctor.

length of treatment

Initially we estimated your length of treatment to a range of months. The actual length of orthodontic treatment depends on the severity of your problem, your body's response to orthodontic forces, keeping appointments, and your cooperation. When you are told to start wearing elastics, wear them as instructed so that you finish on time!

appointments

We value the time you set aside for our appointments and we will accomplish as much as possible at each visit. Our team works hard to ensure you are seen in a timely matter. We ask that you respect our time as we and if you must change an appointment or you know you will be late, please call us in advance as a courtesy to us and other patients waiting.

poking wires and brace Irritations

Placing a small piece of wax over braces that are causing initial irritation can help the soft tissues get used to them. Occasionally a wire may slide out the back of the last brace and cause it to irritate your cheek. If this occurs, dry the area with a cotton ball and place a small piece of wax over the wire until you can come into the office for us to adjust the wire. Sometimes a poking wire can be bent out of the way with the end of a toothbrush or eraser. If it very long, you may even try cutting it with a nail clipper. Either way, please call the office even if it is after hours. We always have someone on call to manage emergencies although most of the time we can walk you through how to get comfortable over the phone.

broken appliances

If you break a brace or a wire, please call us immediately! Sometimes you will notice the bracket connected but moving on the wire – it is still broken! If you wait until your next scheduled visit, there will not be enough time set aside to fix it. A broken brace IS NOT AN EMERGENCY but we need to know so that we can schedule time appropriately to repair it. Typically those appointments are during school hours so follow the food guide to minimize these types of disruptions!

sports and braces

Contact sports require orthodontic specific mouth guards. We have some in the office just let us know you need one. ShockDoctor also makes mouthguards for braces that have a comfortable gel lining that can be bought at sporting goods stores.

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foods to eat and foods to stay away from

Hard and sticky foods break braces which cause you to be in treatment longer than you need be. This is merely a guide for eating habits therefore use common sense with items not listed or call if you have questions.

bad news.....

- NO gum
- NO hard foods- do not eat: hard pizza crust, French bread crust, pretzels, bagels, nuts, popcorn, nacho chips, hard tacos, ice, peppermints, Jolly Ranchers, Lemonheads
- NO sticky foods/candy like caramels, Starbursts, taffy, Skittles, Snickers, beef jerky
- Biting apples, raw vegetables, corn on the cob, and meat off the bone can be too much pressure on the front teeth and should not be done.
- Soda has sugar and acid which creates a great environment for cavities
- Biting finger nails, pens, and ice can all cause broken brackets.

good news....

- Veggies can be cooked or shaved and then eaten
- Apples, bagels, corn on the cob and ribs/chicken can be cut into pieces (off the bone/cob) and then eaten
- "Pringles" are soft enough for potato chips
- "Pirates Booty" is a soft popped popcorn you can eat
- Chocolates like Hershey bars and Reese's cups are soft enough

oral hygiene

Brushing your gums IS AS IMPORTANT AS brushing your teeth!

Orthodontic appliances accumulate food and plaque which cause tooth decay, white scars, and periodontal disease unless promptly and thoroughly removed. Regular brushing and flossing prevents permanent damage.

brushing and flossing

- 3 times a day for 2 minutes each time
- Brush ABOVE, BELOW, and IN BETWEEN BRACES
- Floss nightly before bed with floss threaders or superfloss.
- Waterpiks can assist in flossing and soothe puffy gums
- Over the counter fluoride rinses offer extra protection against cavities