



ORAL HYGIENE INSTRUCTION

If you thought brushing your teeth was important, you're right. But people undergoing orthodontic treatment need to be even more dedicated to good oral hygiene. Braces trap food easily, which contributes to plaque formation. Plaque is a mixture of bacteria, debris and bits of food. The bacteria feed on sugars and produce acids. The acids can irritate your gums, erode the enamel on your teeth, cause gum disease and decay and contribute to bad breath. It's important to remove this plaque thoroughly and often. Then, when your braces come off, the surfaces of your teeth underneath the braces will be healthy and strong and look good.

The following is a description of the necessary tools we have given you to keep your teeth healthy while in braces.

MEDIUM BRISTLE TOOTHBRUSH — This is a special toothbrush that will withstand the metal from your braces better than a soft bristle toothbrush. The first thing you need to know is that you should brush for at least five to seven minutes every time you eat. You should examine your teeth in the mirror. Look to see if the brackets and teeth are free of food particles. If not, brush again. Be sure to brush the area between the brackets and the gums. Food gets caught under the wire and must be removed to avoid decay and permanent stains. The gums also need stimulation to remain healthy. Your braces block foods that normally stimulate the gums during chewing. Brushing your gums helps make up for that missing "exercise".

INTERDENTAL BRUSH — This brush can be used to clean under the wire where your toothbrush cannot reach.

FLOSS - Daily use of unwaxed floss is recommended to remove plaque between teeth and beneath the gum line.

FLOSS THREADER — This is a guide to help you get the floss underneath the wire.

We will also give you a travel toothbrush, mirror, wax and a timer. Let us know if you run out of any of these items or if your toothbrush has worn out. We will be glad to give you another one.

Don't ignore your dentist just because you're visiting an orthodontist regularly. It is still important to visit your dentist for a check up and cleaning. You should go as often as your dentist recommends.