



**PASHA ORTHODONTICS**  
Aurora • Naperville • Plainfield  
[www.pashaorthodontics.com](http://www.pashaorthodontics.com)

**AURORA**  
452 N. Eola Rd., Suite C • Aurora, IL 60502  
**630.820.1200**

**NAPERVILLE**  
1112 S. Washington, Suite 210 • Naperville, IL 60540  
**630.961.3810**

**SOUTH NAPERVILLE / PLAINFIELD**  
4827 S. Rt. 59, Suite 115  
Naperville, IL 60564  
**630.527.6000**



# Braces Care Tips and Tricks

## I JUST STARTED MY BRACES JOURNEY, NOW WHAT?

**Congratulations, you have made the big decision to straighten your teeth and now have your braces. This decision can be one of the most rewarding things you do. The following information will help make your orthodontic treatment as easy as possible while keeping your teeth and gums healthy and clean.**

**Our goal is to give you the best smile possible and in order to accomplish this we will need your help!!**

### ORAL HYGIENE AND BRACES

It is important for you to know that the buildup of plaque on the teeth or around the braces can easily cause gum disease, cavities, or permanent marks (white spots) on the front of your teeth. With braces, it will take you a bit longer to brush your teeth properly. Here is some good advice to make brushing easier and help you do a more thorough job.

### BRUSHING TIPS

Always use a soft bristle toothbrush. Electric toothbrushes are a great way to get your teeth super clean. Look at each tooth as you brush it. Make small circular brushing motions. Brush along the gum line making sure to point the bristles at an angle into the area between the tooth and the gums. Plaque likes to hide in this area...beware! Brush above, below, and on the front of each bracket. Then point the bristles under the wire.

Make up your own routine so that no area is missed. For example, begin with your upper right last molar tooth. Brush it clean, and move on to the next tooth. Continue until you reach your upper last left molar tooth and then switch to the bottom teeth.

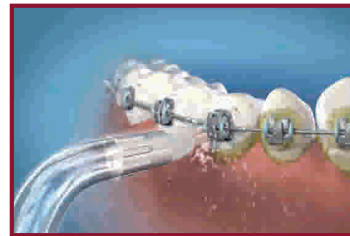
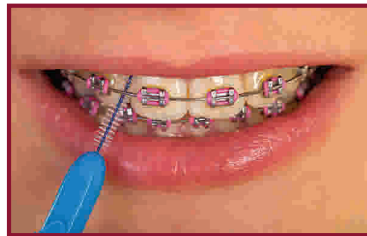


Again, start on one side and move all the way to the other side making sure to get every tooth. Once the front sides of your teeth are clean, begin brushing the back side of your teeth in the same order. Finally, brush the biting surface of all your teeth. You should also brush your tongue. This will help to keep your breath smelling fresh.

**After brushing**, rinse your teeth thoroughly with water. Take a good look at your teeth and braces in the mirror. Each brace should look shiny and all the teeth should be free of plaque or food. If you see any places that were missed, quickly brush that area again with only the toothbrush and water. Using toothpaste again will only block your view.

### **CLEANING BETWEEN THE TEETH**

One of the hardest areas to keep clean is between the teeth and under the wire. For this reason, we have given you a special type of brush called an Inter-dental (Proxy) toothbrush. It has a very small brush designed to clean in these hard to get to areas. It looks like a small pipe cleaner or miniature Christmas tree and it should be used to clean between all of your brackets. If you have any questions about this unique type of brush, be sure to ask us at your next appointment. It should be used at least once each day, ideally when you brush before going to bed. If needed, use it as often as you can.



**\*\*An easy and effective way to clean and floss braces and improve gum health is to use a Waterpik® Water Flosser with the Orthodontic Tip. It is clinically proven more effective than dental floss for people with braces. These are available in our office, or ask your dentist.**



## HOW OFTEN DO I NEED TO BRUSH?

In order to make sure your teeth and gums stay healthy when the braces are taken off, you need to brush three times each day. The ideal times for brushing are in the morning after eating breakfast and in the evening before going to bed. You should spend at least 2-3 minutes each time you brush your teeth. Newer electric toothbrushes have a built-in timer to help you make sure you are spending enough time brushing. Some have Bluetooth technology to monitor your brushing habits with an App on your cell phone or tablet.

Manual or Electric Options:



## CONSEQUENCES OF POOR BRUSHING

If you do not do a good job when you brush and/or do not brush often enough, the consequences can be permanent. When the braces are taken off your gums may be red and swollen which is a sign of gingivitis. Even worse than that is when the teeth may have cavities or permanent white spots on the front. All of this **can be avoided** with good brushing and flossing habits right from the start.



**PROPER BRUSHING**



**POOR BRUSHING**

## CLEAN TEETH FOR APPOINTMENTS

Please brush your teeth well before every appointment. It is very difficult as well as unpleasant to work on dirty teeth. We will grade your brushing at each appointment...and we are strict. Don't be offended or discouraged if we criticize your brushing. We are only trying to make sure you will have the best smile after the braces are taken off as well as help you develop good brushing habits that will last a lifetime.

If you get caught with good brushing, we will put your name in our monthly raffles for an awesome gift card. Why not, you earned it!



## DISCOMFORT

### WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE BRACES?

It is expected that there will be some initial soreness after new wires are placed, rubber bands are started, or an expander or Herbst appliance is delivered. The teeth will slowly begin to move and you will feel some pressure on them. Usually, the soreness and pressure will go away after a few days. As the teeth move you will also notice that your bite will feel different. This is expected and will eventually return to normal again.

### HELPFUL HINTS FOR SORENESS

If you feel pressure and soreness after your braces appointment you can switch to a soft diet until the soreness is gone. Try to eat normal foods again after 1-2 days as this may help make the pain go away quicker. If needed, you can use Rincinol (which we provided in your braces kit) or you can take over-the-counter pain medications such as Advil, Tylenol, or Aleve until the soreness decreases 2-3 days later.

### LIP, CHEEK, OR TONGUE IRRITATION

If one of the braces or wires is causing irritation to your lips, cheeks, or tongue you should take Canker X Gel or take a small piece of the soft wax (which we provided in your brace kit) and place it directly over the brace. If this does not help and the irritation does not go away after a few days, please feel free to give us a call. Soft tissue irritation on the cheeks and tongue is expected but it will eventually heal and form a callus.

### EMERGENCY VS. NON-EMERGENCY

If a brace comes loose, first check the flyer HANDLING ORTHODONTIC EMERGENCIES.

If not urgent, please call us at any of our locations to let us know that you will need an appointment to come in sooner. Please let us know what the concern is: fix broken bracket, wire poke, loose appliance, etc.

Call, email or text us at your earliest convenience during our normal office hours Monday through Friday. We are almost always at a location Monday through Friday 9-4 to assist you. When the Doctor is in, hours will average from 9-6 when seeing patients.

Knowing that a brace has come loose will allow us to schedule a slightly longer appointment to fix the brace at your next visit. If you come in with a loose brace without knowing, we probably **will not have time** to fix it and you may have to make an additional trip to the office.

A loose brace is not always necessarily an emergency, but we will try to schedule an appointment sooner to fix it or get you in to make you comfortable in the meantime. If any of the brackets come off the wire, please bring it with you to your appointment.



If a wire has shifted, is broken, or comes out and is cutting into your cheek or gums, please give us a call. This is an urgent visit and we will attempt to fix it right away. Use the wax to cover any sharp or poking wire to help until we are able to see you in the office. If for any reason something is giving you excess pain and is not merely the initial discomfort from a new wire, please call the office immediately.

**In more urgent cases,** Our Doctors are available by calling, or can be reached anytime via text. They will respond as soon as possible.

## **FINISHING TREATMENT ON TIME**

**Our goal is to get your braces off as quickly as we can!**

In order to finish your treatment in the amount of time we estimated at the beginning we will need the following:

1. Regular attendance at all of your appointments
2. Minimal broken appliances and braces
3. Good brushing and flossing
4. Good cooperation with wearing rubber bands

Poor compliance may cause your treatment time to be extended several months!

## **AFTER BRACES**

We recommend you set up a cleaning exam by your dentist. It's not uncommon for people to see their new, straight teeth for the first time and feel a little disappointed when they see yellowing, stains, and other discolorations that can occur during orthodontic treatments. After all your patience and hard work, professional teeth whitening is a great way to put that sparkle back into your smile. Schedule a visit with your dentist to review options including their preferred whitening toothpastes for home care.



## EATING HABITS

Eating hard or sticky foods and biting on hard objects will cause broken brackets and possibly bend a wire during your treatment. This can cause your teeth to move in the wrong direction and will require additional months of treatment to correct.

## FOODS WHICH ARE NOT ALLOWED

In general, you need to avoid foods and/or candies, which are hard or sticky. For example, you should stay away from caramels, taffy, licorice, hard rolls, Italian bread, bagels, and any hard candy. You should not chew on hard objects such as pens, pencils, eye glasses, toothbrushes, silverware, and ice cubes. We have included in this handout a separate detailed food list of things that should be avoided while you have your braces on. Please read it carefully and keep it for a reference.

### CANDY EXAMPLES you should NOT EAT:

Bit of Honey	Heath Bar	Rock Candy
Butterfingers	Jaw breakers	Candy canes
Caramel corn	Now and Later	Hard Life Savers
Caramel candy	Ju-Ju Bees	Starburst
Dots candy	Hard Licorice	Sugar Babies/Daddy
Frozen candy bars	Milk Duds	Skittles
Fruit Roll Ups	O'Henry Bars	Laffy Taffy
Suckers	100 Grand Bar	Taffy Apples
Good and Plenty	Peanut Brittle	Tootsie Rolls
Hard peppermint candy	Red Hots	Tootsie Roll Pops

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF FOODS you should NOT EAT:

Whole Apples (should be cut into slices)  
Raw carrots (must be cooked or at least sliced)  
Corn on the Cob (can be cut off the cob)  
Hard Rolls, bagels or breads (crust on Italian Bread)  
Ice cubes (chewing on ice)  
Popcorn (thin husk from the popcorn kernel can get stuck beneath the braces and gums and can cause soreness and a gingival abscess)

### EXAMPLES OF PERMITTED POPCORN & CANDY YOU CAN EAT:

Peppermint Patties	Nestles Crunch	Kit Kats
Reese's Peanut Butter Cups	3 Musketeers	Milky Way
Hershey Bars (without nuts)		

Examples of Puffed popcorn: Pirates Booty, Chester's Puff Corn, or O-KE-DOKE by Jays



## Gum Chewing

Yes, you will be allowed to chew gum at a certain time when you have your braces. At the beginning of your treatment, the wires are very flexible and bend very easily. Chewing gum early in your treatment will cause your wires to pop out of the brackets and they will poke your cheeks and gums. Excessive gum chewing at the early stages of treatment can also cause your wires to become bent or your brackets to break off the teeth. This is why most orthodontists have traditionally not allowed gum chewing during your braces. However, at the later stages of treatment your wires will become stronger and stiffer. Chewing sugar free gum at this time in treatment will stimulate the natural flow of saliva and your saliva is what helps naturally clean and protect your teeth from decay. Remember, it must be sugar free gum to avoid getting cavities. Sugar free gums include brands such as Extra, Trident, Carefree, Freedent, or Dentyne. Do not chew large, thick pieces of gum such as Bubble Yum or Bazooka gum or large, hard gum balls!

Once again, congratulations on your decision to have braces and take care of your teeth. The doctors and staff here at **Pasha Orthodontics** are excited to help you get the beautiful smile that you have always wanted. You deserve it!

With your help, we are committed to,  
**“GOING THE EXTRA MILE TO CREATE YOUR BEAUTIFUL SMILE!”**

Check us out for more instructions, fun videos and more...  
<https://www.youtube.com/c/PashaOrthodontics3>

Or visit our website for more information [www.pashaorthodontics.com](http://www.pashaorthodontics.com)



Scan Here





# Handling Orthodontic Emergencies

## TOOLS & SUPPLIES

- Non-medicated orthodontic relief wax
- Dental floss
- Sterile tweezers
- Small, sharp clipper
- Q-tips
- Salt
- Interproximal brush
- Toothpicks
- Topical Anesthetic (such as Orabase or Ora-Gel)

## A. Ligature

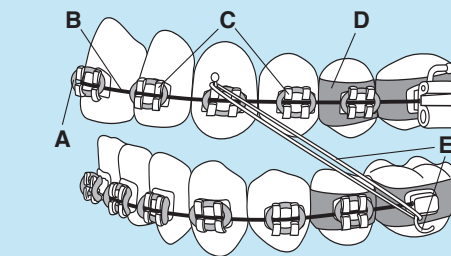
The archwire is held to each bracket with a ligature, which can be either a tiny elastic or a twisted wire.

## B. Archwire

The archwire is tied to all of the brackets and creates force to move teeth into proper alignment.

## C. Brackets

Brackets are connected to the bands, or directly bonded on the teeth, and hold the archwire in place.



## D. Metal Band

The band is the cemented ring of metal which wraps around the tooth.

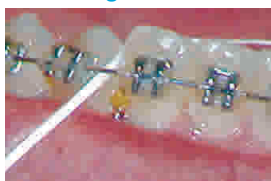
## E. Elastic Hooks & Rubber Bands

Elastic hooks are used for the attachment of rubber bands, which help move teeth toward their final position.

## EMERGENCY TREATMENTS

The following orthodontic emergencies and their treatments are listed in the order of the least severe to the most severe. Only the most severe emergencies may require immediate attention by an orthodontist. The majority of these are easily treated with a follow-up by the patient's orthodontist.

### Food Caught Between Teeth



This is not an emergency, but can be a little uncomfortable or embarrassing for the braces-wearing patient. It is easily fixed with a piece of dental floss. Try tying a small knot in the middle of the floss to help remove the food, or use an interproximal brush or toothpick to dislodge food caught between teeth and braces.

### Ligatures Come Off



Tiny rubber bands or small, fine wires, known as ligatures, hold the wire to the bracket. If a rubber ligature should come off, you may be able to put it back in place using sterile tweezers. If a wire ligature comes loose, simply remove it with sterile tweezers. If the wire ligature is sticking out into the lip but is not loose, it may be bent back down with a Q-tip or pencil eraser to eliminate the irritation.

Of course, when one ligature pops off or breaks, others may follow. Be sure to examine all ligatures. Missing or broken ligatures should be brought to the attention of the patient's parent/guardian, who should then inform the orthodontist.

If a rubber or wire ligature is lost, notify the parent/guardian so that the orthodontist may advise whether the patient should be seen.

### Discomfort

It's normal for a patient to have discomfort for a day or two after braces or retainers are adjusted. But it can make eating uncomfortable. Reassure the patient that the discomfort is both normal and temporary. Encourage soft foods. Have the patient rinse the mouth with warm salt water.

### Mouth Sores



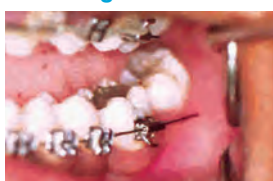
Some patients are susceptible to episodes of mouth sores. While braces do not cause them, they may be precipitated or exacerbated by an irritation from braces. One or several areas of ulceration of the cheeks, lips or tongue may appear. This is not an emergency, but may be very uncomfortable for the patient. Prompt relief may be achieved by applying a small amount of topical anesthetic (such as Orabase or Ora-Gel) directly to the ulcerated surface using a cotton swab. Instruct the patient to reapply as needed.

### Irritation of Lips or Cheeks



Sometimes new braces can be irritating to the mouth, especially when the patient is eating. A small amount of non-medicinal relief wax makes an excellent buffer between metal and mouth. Simply pinch off a small piece and roll it into a ball the size of a small pea. Flatten the ball and place it completely over the area of the braces causing irritation. The patient may then eat more comfortably. Let the patient know that if the wax is accidentally ingested, it's not a problem. The wax is harmless.

### Protruding Wire



Occasionally, the end of a wire will work itself out of place and irritate the patient's mouth. Use a Q-tip or pencil eraser to push the wire so that it is flat against the tooth. If the wire cannot be moved into a comfortable position, cover it with relief wax. (See *Irritation of Lips or Cheeks above for instructions on applying relief wax.*) The patient's parent/guardian will need to make the orthodontist aware of the problem.

In a situation where the wire is extremely bothersome and the patient will not be able to

see the orthodontist anytime soon, you may, as a last resort, clip the wire.

Reduce the possibility of the patient swallowing the snapped piece of wire by using folded tissue or gauze around the area. Use a pair of sharp clippers and snip off the protruding wire. Relief wax may still be necessary to provide comfort to the irritated area.

### Loose Brackets, Wires or Bands



If the braces have come loose in any way, the parent/guardian needs to be notified, and they should call the orthodontist to determine appropriate next steps.

Brackets are the parts of braces attached to teeth with a special adhesive. They are generally positioned in the center of each tooth. The bracket can be knocked off if the patient has eaten one of those hard or crunchy foods orthodontic patients are instructed to avoid, or if the mouth is struck while at play. (*Encourage all patients, especially those with braces, to wear a protective mouth guard while playing sports.*)

If the bracket is off center, the adhesive may have failed. Call the parent/guardian, and recommend that they immediately notify the orthodontist, who will determine the course of action.

If the loose bracket has rotated on the wire and is sticking out and the patient cannot immediately be taken to the orthodontist, you can do a temporary fix to alleviate discomfort and prevent further damage. But take care to prevent swallowing or other injury.

To put the bracket back in place, use sterile tweezers to slide the bracket along the wire until it is between two teeth. Rotate the bracket back to the proper position, then slide it back to the center of the tooth.

### Piece of Appliance is Swallowed

This is rare, but when it does happen, it can be fairly alarming to the patient. Encourage your patient to remain calm. If the patient is coughing excessively or having difficulty breathing, the piece could have been aspirated.

If you are able to see the piece, you may carefully attempt to remove it. But do not make the attempt if you could cause harm.

If appropriate under the circumstances, examine the patient's braces for problems that may result from the missing piece, such as looseness or irritation, and treat as specified above.

If you are unable to see the piece and believe it may have been aspirated, notify the parent/guardian and the orthodontist immediately.