

norman family dentistry

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Homecare Instructions for Braces

How to brush with braces

It's not always easy to brush and floss well, and braces can make it even more challenging. Because brackets and wires can trap food and plaque, we recommend brushing and flossing after every meal to fight tooth decay and bad breath.

Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste on a soft bristled brush. Brush normally but make sure you brush well above and below the archwires. We'll be happy to review proper brushing technique with you. We may also recommend a proxabrush. It's a small brush with a tufted head that fits into tight places.

If you don't brush, plaque can build up around your braces and cause unsightly white spots on your teeth that will be obvious once the braces are removed. These spots are permanent.

Remember to floss!

Flossing is also very important. You need to be diligent about flossing at least once a day. A threader can make flossing easier. Pull the floss through the loop of the threader, and push the straight end under the wire, pulling the floss through. Make sure you floss both sides of every tooth. Superfloss might also make the job easier. It has a stiff, straight end and a tufted center section. Thread the stiff end under the wire, and use the tufted portion to floss between your teeth. We may suggest using a special flosser made just for braces. You simply slip the thin arm under the archwire and floss each tooth. We may also recommend special tools and rinses to help you do a more thorough job.

A few more tips for success

Eating with braces takes a little extra care. Avoid chewy or sticky foods that can be difficult to clean off of your braces. Hard foods, such as apples and carrots, should be cut into smaller bite-sized pieces. We want your braces to be as comfortable as possible. If they irritate the inside of your mouth, we can give you a special wax to cushion the area. If the wires break or come loose, call us. Keep your regular check-ups with your dentist and with your orthodontist. Braces are an investment in your health. Take good care of them so you will finish your treatment on time, and you'll be rewarded with beautiful, straight teeth and a healthy smile.