

# WILLOW ORTHODONTICS

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## How to Take Care of Your Braces!

### What to Expect

Now that you have braces, you are probably wondering what to expect. Do my lips and gums get irritated? How long does the discomfort last? What are the best remedies? These are common questions you will need answered.

When braces are placed, there is very little discomfort initially. Six to eight hours after the braces are placed; however, they will begin to move your teeth. This movement is usually accompanied with some discomfort and dull aching mouth. The best way to remedy these effects is to eat soft foods (mashed potatoes, pasta, hamburger, etc.) and to take mild pain relievers (Aspirin, Advil or Tylenol). These symptoms diminish over the course of the first week. Remember this soreness is normal and it will go away!



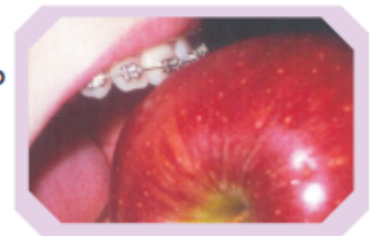
### Foods & Habits to avoid

There are certain foods and habits which can put pressure on your braces and cause them to loosen or break this not only hurts but can slow your treatment time.



### Hard food:

Foods like apples, carrots, corn on the cob should all be cut into small pieces before eating. Biting directly into them could cause the braces to become loose.



### Chewy and Sticky Candies:

Foods which are extremely sticky can tug and pull at the braces and cause them to come loose. Avoid caramel, taffy, gummy bears, starbursts, skittles, etc. Use your common sense as to which candies are too chewy.

### Meat:

Meat on the bones must be cut off the bone before eating such as chicken legs, spare ribs, etc.

# Keeping Your Braces Clean!

## Brushing and Oral Hygiene

As you can imagine, food can easily get stuck in braces. That means extra attention must be paid to oral hygiene while you are in braces. Although no food can get underneath the airtight seal of the brackets themselves, special care must be taken to make sure that food is removed from under the wires and that the teeth and gums stay clean.



## Flossing:

Insert floss behind archwire. Using Floss Threaders or Super floss  
Gently clean sides of teeth and under gums with an up-and-down motion.  
Floss between all teeth once a day.  
Waterflosser such as Waterpik is great but does not replace flossing



## Brushing:

Use a soft toothbrush. Start brushing on the upper right. Brush above and below the braces using a small circular motion. Slowly work your brush toward the front teeth and over to the left side. Then brush the insides and biting surfaces. If you still see plaque when you are done do it again!



Poor brushing and flossing could lead to permanent white spots, and gingivitis!

**BRUSH AND FLOSS!**

# 4 Things That Can Shorten Treatment Time!

## 1) Keeping your appointments and being on time.

Each missed appointment can lengthen treatment time by about a month.

## 2) Not breaking your appliances.

Broken appliances can stop or reverse treatment progress. Please be sure to wear a mouth guard to protect your teeth and braces when participating in contact sports. Extensive repairs may require an appointment during school or work hours

## 3) Wearing your elastics and appliances as instructed.

Your teeth won't move if instructions are not followed.

## 4) Keeping your teeth and braces clean.

All efforts should be focused on designing your new smile, not on unhealthy teeth and gums. Clean teeth with healthy gums move faster.



Excellent brushing and flossing will result in a beautiful and healthy smile!



Poor brushing and flossing will result in white spots and swollen gums and decalcification! BRUSH AND FLOSS! If you still see plaque after you brush DO IT AGAIN!



# Broken? Poking?



If you have a broken bracket it will remain attached to the wire. If it is not bothering you we will reattach it for you at your next appointment.



If you have a loose or broken band and it is still attached to wire leave it until next appointment. If a band or bracket comes off completely save it and bring it in to your next visit.



If you have a wire come out of your bracket either come in and we will fix it for you or you can attempt to gently glide the wire back in with a pair of tweezers.



Example of placing the wire in with tweezers. Be careful not to break a bracket or the wire itself.



If you have a poking wire remember when teeth start shifting the wire may also shift. If you are in pain come in and we will fix your wire.



If your poking wire is causing minor discomfort or a wire is bothering your lip place the wax we have given you on the wire or the bracket to help with the discomfort