



# TeenCare

LIBERTY cares about more than just teeth!

## Braces: What to Expect

**Life with braces is different** and adjusting to this inconvenience is only temporary. Even though braces are temporary, you still need to protect and take care of your teeth and gums hiding below your braces. In no time, you will have perfectly aligned teeth and this temporary adjustment will be well worth the time!

### tip:

*For less discomfort, use dental wax to cover any sharp areas of braces*

### Keeping your teeth and gums healthy:

- 1. Use a regular soft toothbrush** and brush down from the top and then up from the bottom on each tooth with braces.
- 2. Follow up with a proxabrush** or 'Christmas tree' brush, which is specially designed for cleaning between two braces brackets. Insert the proxabrush down from the top and then up from the bottom between two braces. Use several strokes in each direction until all teeth have been cleaned.
- 3. After brushing, floss.** Dental floss is the preferred way to remove plaque in-between teeth, but it can be cumbersome to thread the floss through and around braces. Using a good water flosser (oral irrigator) is an excellent way to remove plaque in-between teeth. It is easy to use, and the powerful water jet will get to places that cannot be reached by a toothbrush or dental floss, and results in overall better oral health.





### Soreness caused from braces and appliances

When you first get your braces, you may notice that your teeth and mouth feel a little tender or sore. This is perfectly normal for patients who have just started their treatment and know that your mouth will not be sore forever! It is also not uncommon for your lips, cheeks, and tongue to become irritated for one to two weeks as they toughen and become used to the braces. The orthodontist should provide you with some dental wax to cover any sharp areas of your braces for less discomfort. Ask your orthodontist.

### Take Care of your appliances

Be sure to take care of all your appliances. If you damage your brackets, wires, or retainers this can increase the length of your treatment. Your teeth and jaw can only move into their correct positions if you consistently wear your rubber bands, aligners, retainers, or other appliances prescribed by your orthodontist.

## playing sports with braces:

You can still play sports even with your braces!

- If you do play sports, it is recommended that you wear a mouth guard in order to protect your teeth and your appliance (*ask your orthodontist*)
- In case of a sports emergency, be sure to immediately check your mouth and your appliance for any damage that may have occurred
- If you notice any loose teeth, or if your appliance has been damaged, please contact your orthodontist office right away

## foods to avoid with braces:

- **Chewy foods** - bagels, licorice
- **Crunchy foods** - chips, ice
- **Sticky foods** - caramel candies, candied apple
- **Hard foods** - nuts, hard candies
- **Foods that require biting into** - popcorn, corn on the cob, apples, carrots

