

Happy Smiles Club

John G Plummer + Associates Dental Surgeons

Oral hygiene advice and braces

When braces are on the teeth it is more difficult to brush effectively.

If plaque is not removed regularly, the bacteria can accumulate and produce acid that eats away at the tooth enamel by removing calcium. This acid can create unattractive white marks on the teeth.



These white spots are signs of cavities in their initial stages. Unfortunately, white spot lesions do not go away after braces are removed but

remain as permanent reminders of poor oral hygiene during orthodontic treatment and can progress to cavities if hygiene does not improve.



Bacteria around braces can also lead to gingivitis (red, swollen, painful gums that bleed easily). If gingivitis is not reversed, it may lead

to gum recession and bone loss around the teeth. Therefore, good oral hygiene during orthodontic treatment with braces is very important.



What can I do to prevent this?

- Brush 3 times a day for 3-4 minutes ensuring you clean each tooth surface, around the brackets and wires. Food can get stuck in the wires and brackets of your braces so it's important to clean your teeth after every meal.
- Orthodontic toothbrushes/interdental brushes allow you to reach between the appliance components to remove plaque and food debris.
- Rinsing with a fluoride mouthwash (at a different time to brushing) will not only help keep bacteria at bay, it will also help to strengthen the teeth and ensure good gum health.
- Disclosing tablets help you see where plaque is building up on your teeth by dyeing it purple. By identifying these areas, you will know which teeth to give a little extra attention.



- The frequency and amount of sugary food and drinks should be reduced and when consumed, limited to meal times. Sugars should not be consumed more than 3 times a day.
- Hard, chewy and sticky foods, including chewing gum, must be especially avoided when you're having orthodontic treatment as these have the potential to damage the brackets and wires and affecting your treatment.

