



## CONGRATULATIONS!!!!!!

### What's next now that you have your braces on?

#### HOW DO BRACES WORK?

- Braces consist of three things. Bands, brackets and wires. Bands are the anchors that allow us to move all the teeth in front. Brackets are the handlebars that allow us to move your teeth using wires as a railroad track.
- Your initial wires will be very light and flexible to comfortably move your teeth the majority of the way. As we progress through treatment your wires will get thicker and more rigid to move teeth in varying amounts and directions.
- You will see us approximately every six to eight weeks at the early stages of your treatment. As we get closer to finishing we may shorten the intervals a bit to continue perfecting the final details.

#### HOW WILL IT FEEL?

- You will feel pressure as the wires gently push and pull your teeth along the track. The discomfort can last up to a week and can be relieved with over the counter pain medication such as Motrin, Tylenol or Advil.

#### WHAT WILL YOU SEE?

- Teeth can move at varying speeds depending on the density of your bone. As teeth continue to move through the bone you may notice some mobility. Once teeth move to their proper position the bone around them will harden again and the mobility will subside.

#### POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:

- Brackets falling off/coming unglued from the teeth  
Brackets sometimes come off at the beginning of treatment due to eating too hard and sticky foods. Also some types of enamel do not respond well to standard orthodontic glue. Once the bond between the bracket and your tooth is broken, the bracket cannot move your tooth and treatment cannot progress until it is fixed and back on track. As long as you are comfortable, call the office to schedule a repair appointment in the next few weeks. If there is any discomfort, please tell the receptionist that you would like a comfort adjustment prior to the repair appointment. If you can remove the bracket or band off the wire, do so and bring them with you to your appointment so that we can replace them.
- Poking wire  
At the beginning of treatment teeth are generally very crooked and extra wire is needed to connect all brackets. As your teeth start to align less wire in the crooked areas is needed to pass through your braces and therefore the extra wire may start sticking out in the back. You can try to push the part that is poking in with an eraser or the end of a spoon. Also, you have



wax in your starter kit and you should use it until you can come in to the office for us to make you comfortable.

- Wire out of band or bracket.  
During the first months of treatment eating hard foods may sometimes dislodge the highly flexible wires out of the braces in the back. You can try to slide the wire back into the tube using tweezers, but leaving it out is not a major concern unless you are uncomfortable. In that case, you can carefully clip the wire with a fingernail clipper or wire cutter behind the last tooth to which it is securely fastened. Call the office during business hours for a comfort adjustment.
- Loose ties/missing colors  
Call the office to schedule a quick appointment to replace it.
- Canker sores/Cheek irritations  
If your lips or cheeks become irritated rinse with warm salt water, or purchase over the counter canker sore medication such as Orabase or GUM Canker-x. Also you can take any over the counter pain reliever. Place wax over the part of your braces that is causing the discomfort and call the office for a comfort adjustment.
- Swollen/bleeding gums  
Generally the reason for swollen and bleeding gums is the lack of brushing and flossing. The food that gets trapped under the gums causes irritation and inflammation. As the gums swell up and get bigger they trap even more food and cause more irritation. Your body is trying to drain all the bad stuff out by bleeding. Bleeding is an indication of a severe infection of your gums. Therefore, it is very important for you not to avoid the areas when you brush but pay extra attention to them. Gently massage the teeth and the gums with your toothbrush. Floss all the way under the inflamed tissue to clean out the trapped food and bacteria. Rinse with Listerine or Crest Pro-Health. Within a few weeks of proper care the bleeding should subside and the gums should shrink and have a nice pink tone.

By a few months in treatment you will be used to braces, the wires will progress in size and will not be as easily moved by your food, thus the amount of emergencies will significantly decrease or diminish completely.

### **WHAT IS YOUR JOB?**

- Keep your teeth and braces clean and free of plaque by brushing and flossing daily.
- Please, watch what you eat to prevent your braces from breaking. By not being careful, you are only hurting yourself by extending your time in braces.
- Keep your appointments.
- Follow our instructions for any special appliances or elastics.