

## Things to Do After Getting Metal Braces

Getting metal braces requires some adjustments to your daily routine. Here's a list of important things to keep in mind to ensure your treatment goes smoothly and your oral health stays optimal:

### 1. Oral Hygiene

- **Brush after every meal** to remove food particles that can get trapped in your braces. Use a soft-bristle toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.
- **Use an interdental brush** or proxabrush to clean between the brackets and under the wires where your regular toothbrush can't reach.
- **Floss daily** using a floss threader or orthodontic floss to get between the teeth and around the braces.
- Consider using a **water flosser** to make cleaning around the braces easier.
- **Use fluoride mouthwash** to strengthen your enamel and help prevent cavities.

### 2. Dietary Adjustments

- **Avoid sticky and chewy foods** like gum, caramel, and taffy that can get stuck in your braces and pull on the wires.
- Stay away from **hard foods** like nuts, ice, popcorn, and hard candies, which can break brackets or bend wires.
- Cut **hard fruits and vegetables** (like apples or carrots) into small, bite-sized pieces before eating.
- Stick to **softer foods** like yogurt, soup, mashed potatoes, eggs, and pasta for the first few days while adjusting to your new braces.

### 3. Managing Discomfort

- **Mild discomfort** or soreness is common after getting braces or when they are adjusted. This usually goes away in a few days.
- **Over-the-counter pain relievers** (like ibuprofen or acetaminophen) can help alleviate any soreness.
- Use **orthodontic wax** on any brackets or wires that irritate your cheeks or lips. Simply roll a small piece of wax into a ball and apply it to the problem area.
- Rinse your mouth with a **warm saltwater solution** (1 tsp of salt in 8 oz of warm water) to soothe sore spots inside your mouth.

### 4. Protecting Your Braces

- If you play **sports**, be sure to wear a **mouthguard** to protect your braces and teeth from damage during physical activity.
- **Avoid biting into objects** like pens, pencils, or fingernails, as this can break or loosen your braces.

### 5. Regular Orthodontic Visits

- Attend all scheduled **orthodontic appointments** for adjustments and checkups. Missing appointments can delay your treatment and affect your results.

- If a bracket or wire becomes loose or broken, contact your orthodontist right away for a repair.

## **6. Adapting to Changes**

- You may initially have trouble with **speech or chewing**, but this will improve as you get used to your braces.
- Practice **speaking and eating slowly**, and over time, it will become easier.

## **7. Wax for Irritation**

- Always carry **orthodontic wax** with you in case you experience irritation from the brackets rubbing against the inside of your mouth.

By following these steps, you'll ensure your braces work effectively, keep your teeth healthy, and avoid unnecessary delays in your treatment!