

# Important Factors in Caring for Braces



## **TO KEEP THE BRACES ON YOUR TEETH**

### **DO NOT EAT foods that are sticky, crunchy or chewy like:**

- Candy (suckers, jolly ranchers, starburst, caramel)
- Dried meat (beef, chicken or deer jerky)
- Hard chips (tortilla chips, Fritos, Doritos)
- NO ICE!! Ice is not good for your teeth even without braces.
- Granola bars (Natures Valley or chewy granola)
- Don't bite into objects with your front teeth like apples or carrots. Cut them into smaller pieces and chew them with your back teeth.
- Wear mouthpieces when playing sports. We provide these mouthpieces upon request and there is no need to boil them. They should be loose to allow for movement of your teeth.

## **BRUSHING YOUR TEETH**

- Make sure to brush 3-4 times a day. Any time food particles or plaque stay on your teeth it has potential to cause cavities.
- Make sure you floss once a day. The first couple of times may take a while but it is worth the time and effort to keep healthy gums and avoid gingivitis.

## **WEAR YOUR ELASTICS**

- When the doctor asks you to wear your elastics full time that means that we need 18-22 hours of elastic wear EVERY day. There is only 24 hours in a day so that means only take them off to eat. When you are sleeping and in between meals these elastics should be on your teeth. Also, put a new set in after every meal to ensure good pull on the teeth.
- When you are asked to wear the elastics just at night you can place one set in after you brush before bed then take them out before you brush the next morning.

## **KEEP YOURSELF COMFORTABLE**

- Use wax when you need it and please ask for more if you run out.
- Take Ibuprofen every 6-8 hours after we place your brackets on for at least 2 days. You will be the most sore the morning following your bracket placement and if you start medication the day before it will have time to get into your system.
- Please eat when taking Ibuprofen because it can cause indigestion if you don't.

Also please help us watch your teeth. If you have a bracket come off or wire out or see a tooth moving out of position call us so we can keep your treatment on track.