

## Braces – Post-Op & Eating Guidelines

- **Nothing sticky, chewy, or hard** – these foods break brackets and wires.
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### Avoid Completely

- Caramel, gum, gummy candy
- Nuts, popcorn, chips, hard pretzels
- Ice cubes, pizza crust, croutons
- Jellybeans, Skittles, Starburst, Tootsie Rolls
- Chocolate chips, M&Ms, licorice

### Eat With Caution

- Bagels, crusty bread, granola bars
- Corn on the cob, chicken wings, ribs
- Hard fruits/vegetables (cut into small pieces)
- Nacho chips
- Foods high in sugar (brush soon after)

### Safe to Eat

- Pasta, eggs, cheese, yogurt
- Soft sandwiches, soft pretzels, soup
- Steamed vegetables, potatoes
- Cereal in milk
- Ice cream without nuts, milkshakes, pudding, Jell-O

### General Soreness

- Teeth may be sore for **3–5 days**; rinse with warm salt water.
- Lips, cheeks, and tongue may be irritated for **1–2 weeks** – use orthodontic wax.
- Slight tooth looseness is normal as teeth begin to move.

### Home Care

- Brush carefully around brackets and wires.
- Remove elastics before brushing.
- Angle the brush 45° toward the gumline; use small circular motions.
- Brush under wires and around each bracket.
- Brush inside, outside, and chewing surfaces of all teeth.
- Rinse with fluoride mouthwash for 1 minute after brushing.
- Replace elastics as instructed.
- Floss daily using floss threaders or orthodontic floss.

### General Notes

- If you wear a removable appliance, avoid using it if it presses on sore or treated areas.
- Call your orthodontist if you have concerns about pain, broken brackets, or wires.
- Following these instructions helps prevent delays in treatment.