



• Initial Discomfort (3-5 days)

- Eat soft foods
 - Alleviates discomfort
 - Helps you get used to eating with appliances
- General Soreness
 - Everyone feels different levels of tenderness
 - Use salt-water rinse
 - Dissolve 1 teaspoon of salt into 8 ounces of water
 - Swish for 30-60 seconds
- Teeth
 - Normal to be tender and sensitive to pressure
 - Follow the directions of over-the-counter medicine you would take for a headache
- Lips, Tongue, Cheeks
 - Sores and cuts are normal at first
 - Eventually they will toughen and callous over
 - Use Wax around the bracket causing the irritation
 - Roll wax into pea-sized ball and flatten over area
 - Non-toxic and can be swallowed

• Loose Teeth

- NORMAL
- Teeth must be loose (or mobile) to allow movement into correct position
- Teeth firm up after braces are removed

• Brushing and Flossing

- Brush at least THREE times a day
 - Brushing after lunch (no toothpaste required) removes food stuck in braces
- It is not easy to floss but it is extremely important
 - It takes a long time to do it correctly, but skipping flossing causes swollen/sore gums
 - Swollen gums will increase time in braces
- Use a fluoride mouthrinse twice daily
- White spots around brackets are easy to get if good hygiene is not maintained
- You don't want straight teeth with cavities, staining, and white spots everywhere
- We may suggest cleanings every 3 months if hygiene is consistently poor

- **Elastics**

- Wear them!
- Wear them 24 hours a day
 - All the time except for brushing/flossing
 - Most of the time you should eat with your elastics in and replace them with fresh ones after the meal.
 - Chewing really puts your rubber bands to work and your teeth will move faster
 - If you wear them only for 10 out of 24 hours, your teeth will move for 10 hours and then slip back over the next 14
 - Your progress will be zero and you wasted your time
- Initially, the elastics will cause discomfort
 - Eat softer foods
 - Use over-the-counter headache medicine
- Change them *at least* every 8 hours (or after each meal)
 - They lose their stretch, so an old elastic is a useless elastic
- Keep them on your fingers when you brush to remind you to replace them after you are done
- Always carry extras
- Ask us for more if you get low

- **Mouthguard**

- There are specific mouthguards for braces
 - Choose one that is not too tight against the teeth as it may prevent tooth movement
- Wear your mouthguard even during practices/scrimmages

- **Loose Wire or Bracket**

- Don't be alarmed if something comes loose as it is normal in the course of treatment
- Try using a blunt instrument (pencil eraser, back of a spoon, or cotton swab) to move the irritating wire
- Place wax to reduce the annoyance
- Call our office for further instructions
 - You can always try and send us a photo to better explain the situation

- **Ask Questions**

- We want you engaged and understanding your treatment
- Please ask us any questions you have