



ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

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Tips and Tricks: Braces



Why is good oral hygiene with braces so important?

- The bands and brackets of braces create small spaces, trapping food and plaque
- When food comes in contact with plaque in your mouth, acid is formed. This acid can create white spots on the tooth surface
- White spots can lead to cavities

How should teeth and braces be cleaned?

- Brush after all meals and snacks with a soft bristled tooth brush
- Brush down from the top and up from the bottom of each tooth
- Use a proxabrush or “Christmas tree” brush to clean between braces
- When flossing, thread floss between the wire and each tooth



What should you expect with braces?

- When you first get braces, you may feel some pain in your mouth and your teeth may be tender for 3-5 days
- Your lips, cheeks and tongue may become irritated for 1-2 weeks as they get used to the surface of the braces. Try putting wax on the braces to lessen the discomfort
- After braces are removed, a retainer is worn to maintain teeth positioning



What Foods should you avoid with braces?

- Chewy foods such as bagels and licorice
- Crunchy foods such as popcorn, ice and chips
- Sticky foods such as caramels and gum
- Hard foods such as nuts and candy
- Foods you have to bite into such as corn on the cob and apples

