

## Cleaning Your Teeth

### Instructions on oral hygiene/brushing/and flossing teeth

When you examine your new braces carefully you will see many places where food can be trapped leading to decalcification, decay and gum problems. If you do not take sufficient time to clean your teeth or if you are using a poor brushing technique permanent damage to the tooth enamel can occur. Areas on the enamel surface will begin to decalcify leaving unsightly white marks that eventually can progress to decay. If trapped food and plaque is left on and around the teeth and braces this may also cause swollen bleeding gums (gingivitis) and bad breath.

You must clean your teeth and gums after every time you eat. This means after all meals and snacks, so a toothbrush must be taken to school or work. It is not necessary to use toothpaste if the day conditions do not allow for this. Simply run the brush under a tap. If you are wearing elastics remove these before brushing and replace when you are finished.

The Patient Pack will be given to you at the time the braces are put on your teeth. Inside you will find various items to help you keep your teeth clean.

How often do I clean my teeth?	After every time you eat
How long do I brush my teeth?	Minimum 2 minutes
When Do I use disclosing tablets?	Once (1) per week unless otherwise advised
How often do I use a fluoride rinse?	Twice (2) a week unless otherwise instructed.

#### The Battery Toothbrush

When you clean your teeth try to do it systematically eg left to right, upper teeth and then lower teeth.

First the biting surface to soften the bristles, then the inside surface. Clean the outside surfaces where the brackets are attached with a circular motion, cleaning one tooth at a time. The interspace brush is useful for cleaning around the braces under the archwire.

After you have finished, rinse with water and check all those crevices and areas around the braces to ensure they are cleaned satisfactorily. When the tooth brush becomes shaggy it needs replacing.

#### Manual Toothbrush

Use a small soft bristled toothbrush with fluoride toothpaste such as those supplied in the Patient Pack. Take this to work/school to use after you have eaten your morning tea, lunch etc.

#### Disclosing Tablets

(Ingredients F, D & C Blue #1, D & C Red #28)

After thorough brushing take one tablet and chew it up to mix with saliva. DO NOT SWALLOW. Use your tongue to rub the solution over the portion of the tooth between the gum and braces. Spit out the dye and rinse your mouth once with water. Look in the mirror. If there is any plaque on your teeth it will be stained purple/pink colour. Now brush your teeth again paying particular attention to the coloured areas. After the first time you brush and at recommended intervals check how well you are cleaning by using the disclosing tablets provided in your patient pack.

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#### **Fluoride Rinse**

(Neutra Fluor) fluoride rinse should be kept out of the reach of children. Use 10mls (marked on the cap) after thoroughly cleaning your teeth just before bedtime. Rinse vigorously around the mouth and between the teeth for one minute then spit out. Do not rinse out with water, drink or eat afterwards. Notify us if you are using any other fluoride supplement.

#### **Floss**

You can use special dental, Superfloss, with braces (included in the Patient Pack). This floss is designed to thread under the wire through the spaces in your braces. Please ask if you are unsure how this works.

#### **Tooth Brushing Prior to Adjustments**

At our Centre there is a tooth brushing area for patients use. We encourage patients to bring their toothbrush to each appointment and to use this area prior to their adjustment appointment. This not only provides a clean mouth for Dr Sanders to work in but also allows us to assess your brushing technique and as you have your toothbrush with you to provide additional instructions as required.

Toothbrushes, replaceable heads, superfloss, mouth rinses and tooth mousse can be purchased at our reception.

#### **Tooth Mousse**

Tooth Mousse Plus may be used as an alternative to fluoride rinse for some patients. Tooth Mousse Plus is an exciting addition to the preventative dentistry armamentarium, offering the ability to deliver biologically available calcium, phosphate and fluoride ions in ideal concentration to promote the remineralisation of enamel. This product has substantial buffering capabilities and binds well to plaque as well as teeth and other soft tissue, giving a substantial release of ions.

Tooth Mousse Plus can help prevent plaque accumulation around brackets, archwire and other appliances and can assist the saliva in countering acid produced by dental plaque.

Regular application of Tooth Mousse Plus during orthodontic treatment can help prevent areas of decalcification developing. White spot problems can be stopped and reversed but it is important to use Tooth Mousse regularly throughout the full course of orthodontic treatment