



Orthodontic Specialty Services

1120 East Dupont Road

Fort Wayne, IN 46825

260-497-0497

800-999-2815

841 South Union Street

Warsaw, IN 46580

574-267-1490

800-999-2815

We want you to know we will try our very best to achieve the finest possible result for your treatment. We also want you to have a pleasant and rewarding experience in our office. To achieve this, it will require an understanding of the benefits and limitations of orthodontic treatment and an acceptance of responsibility.

Familiarizing yourself with our terminology will enhance our communications and develop an understanding of how the treatment objectives will be met.

BAND: A piece of stainless steel that wraps around the tooth. These are usually only on the back teeth.

BOND: Smaller than a band and attached directly to the surface of a tooth. Bands and bonds serve as a means of getting a “handle” on each tooth.

ARCHWIRE: The horizontal wire that is tied into the bands and bonds which move the teeth.

- + **MAINTENANCE:** Good oral hygiene is essential for good results. Brush your teeth after eating, including snacks. Be sure to spend a minimum of 3 minutes each time you brush! Check in the mirror when finished brushing to be sure the braces are clean and shiny. We recommend rinsing each night with an over-the-counter fluoride rinse as a preventative measure against decay. Regular checkups for cavities, cleaning, fluoride treatment, extractions and other regular dental care must be done on the usual 6-month basis by your family dentist during orthodontic care.
- + **DIET LIMITATIONS:** Orthodontic appliances require some limitations to your diet. Avoiding hard and sticky foods such as gum, taffy, caramel, and ice will help reduce breakage. Excessive breakage hinders progress. Often it is necessary to cut foods, such as carrots and apples, into small pieces to protect your braces or to ease tenderness on the front teeth. For the first day or so, soft foods might be more appropriate during the adjustment period.
- + **GENERAL SORENESS:** There may be a general soreness in your mouth for approximately 3 to 4 days. This condition can be relieved by rinsing with a warm saltwater solution before and after each meal. Tylenol may also be used.
- + **LOOSENING OF THE TEETH:** Loosening of the teeth is common throughout treatment. This is normal! Teeth must be loose so they can move to their new position. The teeth will again become rigidly fixed following removal of the appliances.
- + **LOOSE WIRE OR BAND/BOND:** Once a day, you should spend a few minutes in front of a mirror checking the appliances to make sure they are clean and in good shape. If a band/bond comes loose, don't be alarmed. This happens occasionally. If a piece comes off, place it in an envelope and bring it with you to the office. Please give us advance notice, when possible, if you have something in need of repair. Emergency time is always available, but it depends on the extent of the damage, time of day and overall schedule, it may be necessary to reschedule the full repair of the appliance to allow for the proper attention you deserve.
- + **IRRITATING WIRE:** If a wire protrudes and is irritating, take a blunt instrument (back of a spoon or the eraser end of a pencil) and carefully tuck the irritating wire under the archwire to make it more comfortable. If the irritation to the lips or mouth continues, place wax or wet cotton on the wire to reduce the annoyance.
- + **EMERGENCY APPOINTMENTS:** Patient comfort is top priority! We realize not all irritations occur during regular office hours. Irritations which cannot be remedied at home may require a doctor's attention. As a general rule, an emergency is some type of painful irritation that you are unable to relieve, or a dental accident. In the event of an emergency, call the office and the after-hours number will be given. A clinic technician will return your call to evaluate the problem. It is important to learn the name of the orthodontic appliances as it will help you describe what is broken or out of place when communicating.

The overall treatment time projected was an estimate. Facial growth, poor oral hygiene, poor removable appliance wear, broken appliances and missed appointments are all important factors which can lengthen treatment time and affect the quality of the result.

We look forward to working closely with you, as together we strive for the finest results possible in the shortest period of time consistent with good treatment. Patient-doctor cooperation will greatly determine how long the treatment process will take. Thanking you in advance for your confidence and your cooperation.

ORAL HYGIENE

Oral hygiene is very important for everyone: especially for the orthodontic patient. Understanding the importance of proper oral hygiene and brushing technique will enhance treatment. If the teeth, gums, and orthodontic appliances are kept clean, treatment will progress smoothly, and the teeth may even move more quickly!

IMPORTANCE OF GOOD HOME CARE

The bacteria that forms in our mouth is called plaque. Any time food is left on our teeth, sugars in that food mix with bacteria and saliva. This causes toxins to form, which are then held against the teeth which can cause tooth decay. These toxins, when left on the tooth for a long period of time, may also create a discoloration of the tooth or a permanent white lesion.

The toxins can also irritate the gum tissue, causing them to swell, turn red, and bleed easily when brushed. This indicates there is an infection (gingivitis) and as long as the bacteria continue to grow around the gum line, the infection gets worse. Many times, the gums swell over the appliance. This swelling, along with the collected food and plaque, makes it difficult to adjust the appliance as well as uncomfortable for the patient. The gum infection may spread to the underlying bone, causing periodontal disease. These infected tissues do not respond as efficiently to the pressures we exert to move the teeth, therefore possibly lengthening overall treatment time.

Frequent and deliberate tooth brushing will avoid such problems. Good home care ensures a healthy smile and speedy result.

ORAL HYGIENE MAINTENANCE

- An electric toothbrush or child-size toothbrush is recommended for all patients. A smaller brush aids in cleaning those “hard to reach” areas. Any American Dental Association approved toothpaste that does not include whitening products is recommended.
- Brush after eating, including snacks. Carrying a toothbrush with you will help avoid those awkward moments when you need to brush unexpectedly. If brushing is not possible, rinse thoroughly with water.
- Tooth brushing with bands and bonds will be more time consuming than before. Allow yourself a minimum of 3 minutes each time you brush.
- Brush in a circular motion, cleaning only a few teeth at one time and making sure to brush both above and below the band/bond. Scrubbing back and forth is an inefficient means of brushing and will damage the gum tissue. A light massage on the gum tissue must be done separately. A toothbrush used in a circular motion will accomplish this.
- After brushing, check in the mirror to make sure the appliances are clean and shiny. If the appliances appear dull, improve your brushing technique, and allow yourself additional brushing time.
- Flossing is also encouraged. It can be more time consuming since the floss has to be threaded under the archwire in each spot before actually flossing, but it is the most valuable part of home care since brushing cannot clean between the teeth.
- A waterpik may also be helpful. This device should be used prior to brushing to help remove food and debris from under wires and brackets.
- An over-the-counter fluoride rinse is recommended for nightly use. Used in conjunction with toothpaste just before bed, this rinse will coat the teeth to help retard decay and plaque retention. Brush thoroughly, and then swish the fluoride rinse in your mouth for 60 to 90 seconds before expelling into the sink. It is recommended not to eat or drink afterward, but if it is necessary wait at least 30 minutes.
- Regular dental checkups must be done on the usual six-month basis by your family dentist during your orthodontic treatment.