

# Orthodontic Tips and Tricks

## Tools and Supplies

With these tools and supplies on hand, you will be prepared to handle the most common orthodontic issues.

- Orthodontic relief wax
- Dental floss
- Disinfected tweezers
- Q-tips
- Salt
- Interproximal brush
- Toothpicks
- Non-prescription pain reliever (*acetaminophen or ibuprofen*)
- Topical anesthetic (*such as Orabase or Ora-Gel*)

## Lost O-ring

An O-ring is the tiny rubber band, or sometimes a very thin wire ligature, that holds the orthodontic wire in the bracket. If a rubber O-ring should come off, you may be able to put it back in place using disinfected tweezers. If a wire ligature comes loose, simply remove it with the tweezers. If the wire ligature is sticking out into the lip, but is not loose, it may be bent back down with a Q-tip or pencil eraser to eliminate the irritation.

## Discomfort

It is normal to have some discomfort during orthodontic treatment as your teeth move, however it should not last longer than a couple days. Rinsing your mouth with warm salt water and over-the-counter pain relievers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, may alleviate some discomfort. If the discomfort lasts longer than a couple days, call the dental clinic at (907) 729-2000 to determine appropriate next steps.

## Mouth Sores

Some customer-owners are susceptible to episodes of mouth sores. While braces do not cause them, they may be precipitated or exacerbated by an irritation from braces. One or several areas of ulceration of the cheeks, lips, or tongue may appear. This is not an emergency but may be very uncomfortable. Prompt relief may be achieved by applying a small amount of topical anesthetic directly to the ulcerated surface using a cotton swab — reapply as needed. If the discomfort does not resolve after a couple days, call the dental clinic at (907) 729-2000 to determine appropriate next steps.

## Irritation in Mouth

Sometimes braces or wires can be irritating to the mouth, especially when eating. A small amount of orthodontic relief wax makes an excellent buffer between the metal and mouth. To apply, pinch off a small piece and roll it into a ball the size of a small pea. Flatten the ball and place it completely over the area of the braces causing irritation. Wax can be purchased at most drug stores.

## Contact:

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