

Protecting Your Orthodontic Appliance While Eating



When taking care of braces or an orthodontic appliance, softer foods are recommended—especially after an appointment when your mouth may be sore. As a general rule, if you have to question whether you can eat something with your appliance, it's better to take it slow or avoid it altogether. Additionally, do not chew on non-food items such as pens, pencils, or fingernails.



Avoid hard or sticky foods

Sticky foods can get wrapped around your appliances and cause them to break or come loose. Hard foods can break your braces and damage your appliances.

- ▶ Tootsie Rolls®
- ▶ Mike and Ike®
- ▶ Hard breadsticks
- ▶ Caramels
- ▶ Hard candies
- ▶ Popcorn kernels (fully popped is fine)
- ▶ Starburst®
- ▶ Ice cubes
- ▶ Now and Later®
- ▶ Beef jerky
- ▶ Skittles®
- ▶ Hard granola bars
- ▶ Taffy
- ▶ Suckers/lollipops



Enjoy soft, orthodontic-friendly foods

Many of your favorite soft foods and drinks are perfectly safe with braces or appliances.

- ▶ Water
- ▶ Milk
- ▶ Crystal Light®
- ▶ Gatorade G2®
- ▶ Propel®
- ▶ Yogurt
- ▶ Pudding
- ▶ Bananas
- ▶ Grapes
- ▶ Oranges
- ▶ Fruits without pits
- ▶ Crackers
- ▶ Cheese
- ▶ Mashed potatoes
- ▶ Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches
- ▶ Pasta including ravioli, spaghetti, and macaroni



Avoid high-sugar and high-acidity drinks

High-sugar and high-acidity drinks, when mixed with saliva, create plaque—a sticky film that coats the teeth and is difficult to remove completely, even with brushing.

- ▶ Soft drinks
- ▶ Diet soft drinks
- ▶ Powerade®
- ▶ Gatorade®
- ▶ Energy drinks
- ▶ High-sugar fruit juices



Cut food into smaller pieces

Some foods are fine to enjoy, as long as they are cut into smaller pieces which won't damage your braces or appliance.

- ▶ Apples
- ▶ Bagels
- ▶ Carrots
- ▶ Chips
- ▶ Celery
- ▶ Taco shells
- ▶ Pizza and pizza crust