

Contact Information

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WELCOME

A Guide for Our Patients

This new patient folder will give you useful information regarding your orthodontic treatment. Please keep it handy for reference during your association with this office.

Our goal is to give you healthy, attractive teeth through an individualized program of care. The length of treatment and degree of success will depend, in part, on your cooperation. Your treatment will be most effective if you keep appointments, maintain your appliances and follow treatment instructions. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Office Telephone Numbers

Ft. Washington, PA 215-653-0420
Southampton, PA 215-942-7300
Northeast Philadelphia 215-743-3700

Insurance Information

Our office participates with most major insurance companies. Insurance coverage for orthodontics does not usually begin until treatment has started. If during the course of treatment you terminate or change insurance companies, please contact us immediately in order for us to make the appropriate changes.

Dental Care

During your orthodontic treatment, please continue to visit your family dentist regularly, usually every six months. Our treatment will not affect your regular dental examinations.

Tell a Friend

Our practice continues to grow through referrals from our patients. We sincerely appreciate you recommending our practice to your family, friends and neighbors.

A Final Word

We are beginning a long-term relationship that we know will be enjoyable and of great benefit to you. We are partners in achieving the best results for you or your child. Please remember, we are always available to discuss any questions or concerns you might have.

Broken Appliances/Emergencies

When braces are initially placed and after each adjustment appointment, there is a normal period of discomfort. The teeth will be tender and the lips and cheeks may experience some irritation for a few days. Patients are instructed to take ibuprofen to help relieve the discomfort. Each patient will be given orthodontic wax to place on the braces in areas where irritation to the lips and cheeks occurs. Usually, within a few days the wax is no longer needed except in isolated instances. A supply of wax should be kept at home throughout treatment to use for minor emergencies until the appliances can be checked and adjusted or repaired.

Most Commonly Occurring Problems

- ❖ **End of archwire catching cheek** – Dry off area and apply wax to make the area more comfortable. Call the office to schedule an adjustment during office hours.
- ❖ **Small wire poking toward lip or cheek** – Use a small, flat object (such as a pencil eraser) to flatten and push the wire end back against the tooth.
- ❖ **Loose band or bonded bracket** – These should be repaired within one week unless there is discomfort to the patient.

What to do if there is a problem

- ❖ If there is a problem with the braces or an appliance and you have a regularly scheduled appointment, please call the office prior to the appointment so we can prepare for your arrival. Because short appointments are scheduled in the late afternoon, early evening, it may not be possible to replace loose braces during this time. If this is the case, we will be sure to make the patient comfortable, making sure there is no undesirable effect on the position of the teeth. An appointment will then be scheduled to allow for sufficient time to correct the problem.
- ❖ If you are not due for an appointment, please call the office to inform the receptionist of the nature of the problem and to schedule an appointment with sufficient time to correct the problem.
- ❖ If the office is closed and there is a **true emergency** that requires **immediate attention** that cannot wait until normal working hours, **call the office and follow the instructions to obtain the emergency number to contact one of the orthodontists on call.**

Tooth Brushing During Orthodontic Treatment

One of the most common misconceptions about orthodontics is that braces might cause decay. Actually, the parts of your teeth that are covered by your braces are protected from decay as long as the cement under them holds properly. However, the braces do make certain places on your teeth harder to clean. The brackets and wires that stick out and away from the braces tend to make a little “shelf” around the outside of the teeth which in turn causes problems.

The shelf makes it harder to clean the spaces between the bands and gums with your toothbrush. If you don't get the teeth clean and exercise the gums, the gums swell making it more difficult to clean. If this continues, the gums will turn red and bleed upon brushing. This infection, known as gingivitis, may cause the teeth to move more slowly.

Here are some suggestions that can help you know when and how to clean your teeth during treatment.

WHEN:

Tooth brushing should occur within five (5) minutes after you eat. This includes snacks as well as meals. A folding toothbrush is perfect when you are away from home.

HOW:

1. Brush back and forth across the braces and between the wires and gums on the upper and lower teeth to loosen the food particles.
2. Now brush as if you had no braces:
 - Start on the upper outside surface of the teeth with bristles at a 45 degree angle toward the gum. Scrub with a circular motion, two or three teeth at a time using several strokes then moving on.
 - Do the same thing on the inner surfaces of the upper teeth.
 - Scrub the chewing surfaces last.
 - Start on the outside of the lower teeth and repeat this process. Remember. Direct the brush toward the gum area using the proxy brush.
 - Always remember to brush your tongue as well.
3. Rinse your mouth and toothbrush. Look in the mirror to see if you have missed any places. Check the area of tooth between the band and the gum as well as the area between the brackets and the gum. If you see that you have missed any areas, go back and re-brush.
4. When you have finished, the braces and wires should be free of all food particles. The area of tooth between the braces and gum should be clean.

Please be sure to check the list of foods to avoid while in braces. Avoid foods high in sugar. If you do eat foods high in sugar, brush your teeth immediately following. Good oral hygiene plays a major roll in the end results of treatment.

Scheduling Appointments

Scheduling appointments is one of the most important concerns in an orthodontic practice. It requires trying to achieve a balance between running an efficient practice that delivers quality treatment, and trying to limit the amount of time that the majority of our patients must miss from school. Orthodontic treatment usually involves many appointments scheduled every 4 – 6 weeks over an extended period of time.

It is not possible to see every student after school for every appointment; therefore, we have developed an appointment system that we feel is fair to all patients and allows efficient delivery of quality care. Certain types of treatment are done at certain times of the day, depending on the type of procedure, the time necessary for the procedure, and the availability of staff. By scheduling the infrequent, longer appointments during school time, we can keep the after school hours open for the more frequent, shorter appointments.

Rescheduled or Missed Appointments. If you miss or reschedule an appointment, please keep in mind that our staff will do their best to make a new appointment as soon as possible. Remember that continued missed appointments can lead to longer treatment time.

Appointment Check-In. When you arrive for your appointment, please let the receptionist know of any special requests you may have. Please advise of

- **Broken or lost appliances**
- **Time restrictions**

At completion of your child's appointment, someone will be happy to discuss that day's adjustments with you.

When coming in the office for each appointment, be sure to request excuse notes for school or work if needed.