

What happens if I keep damaging my brace?

Your dentist/orthodontist can offer advice. If you regularly damage your braces, you will lengthen your treatment time. If you want to keep your orthodontic treatment time as short as possible, follow a diet of softer food to make sure that your braces do not break.

A good balanced, healthy diet and excellent oral hygiene are very important during orthodontic treatment to maintain strong and healthy teeth.



The BOS has produced a brace friendly recipe leaflet to give you lots of ideas about healthy food and drinks. It is available to download for free from <https://www.bos.org.uk/NOWRecipebooklet>

REMEMBER

- **Avoid crunchy, hard or sticky foods.**
- **Avoid sugary foods and drinks between meal times and at bed times.**
- **Avoid fizzy and acidic drinks.**
- **Limit fruit juice to meal times and drink it with a straw.**
- **Visit your family dentist for routine check-ups.**
- **Check your braces regularly for any bent or loose parts (do not fiddle).**
- **Brush your teeth for 2 minutes at least twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste. If you can do this after lunch too, then that is great!**
- **If you have any further questions please ask your orthodontist, dentist or hygienist.**

Further information:-

British Dental Health Foundation
website www.dentalhealth.org.uk

NHS Oral Health Specialist Library
website [www.library.nhs.uk/oral health/](http://www.library.nhs.uk/oral%20health/)

For more information about Orthodontics,
please visit: www.bos.org.uk

This leaflet has been produced with guidance from the Plain English Campaign and British Dyslexia Association to make it easier for you to read

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Patient Information Leaflet

TEETH AND BRACE-FRIENDLY FOOD AND DRINK

BOS

BRITISH ORTHODONTIC SOCIETY

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If you are wearing braces, your diet is definitely going to need to change so you do not damage your teeth and your braces.

Food and plaque that are not cleaned off your teeth may lead to permanent and unsightly marks on your teeth and tooth decay.

You must think carefully about what you eat. Softer foods and a good balanced diet are important to successful orthodontic treatment.

What is tooth decay?

When you eat or drink anything (but particularly sugary items), the bacteria (plaque) in your mouth produce acid. This acid can make holes in your teeth (tooth decay). Your teeth will be under attack from this plaque acid for up to one hour after eating food or drinking sugary drinks.



Decayed teeth

Diet and braces

A careful diet is essential when you have braces. Braces and wires are fragile and eating the wrong foods can break your braces and/or damage your teeth. Broken or loose braces will lengthen your treatment as your teeth will not move correctly with a broken brace.

Do I need to change my eating habits?

Choose foods which are softer. Soon after you get your braces fitted and sometimes when they are adjusted, you may want foods that need little or no chewing such as soup, pasta dishes, yoghurts and cheese. This is because the teeth will be more tender to bite on. This may last a few days. Cut up sandwiches, fruit and vegetables rather than biting into them.

Can I eat snacks?

Eating 3 meals a day instead of snacking is better for your health and teeth.

What food and drinks can I eat between meals?

Select healthy foods to eat if you are hungry between meals. These include: wholemeal bread, plain cheese, dry crackers, breadsticks, fruit and vegetables.

When you are thirsty, plain milk or plain water (not fizzy) are good choices. Fruit juices should be kept to mealtimes only.



Food and drinks to avoid during treatment

Common sense will usually tell you what foods to avoid but hard, sticky or crunchy foods can cause problems.

Sticky foods such as toffee, caramel and lollies must be avoided because they can loosen braces and break wires.

Hard and crunchy foods such as apples, raw carrot, pizza crust, nuts, biscuits, celery, chicken wings and spare ribs are best eaten by cutting them up into small pieces and chewing with the back teeth.

Fizzy and soft drinks, even the diet variety,

can cause damage to your teeth so should be avoided during treatment. Chocolates and sweets should be kept to a minimum and only eaten at meal times.