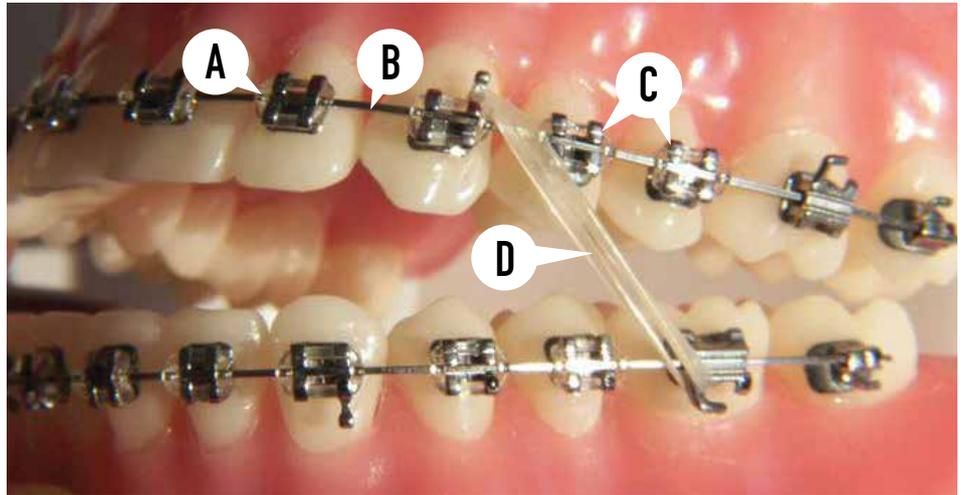


ORTHODONTIC EMERGENCIES

Tools & Supplies

- ➔ Non-medicated orthodontics relief wax
- ➔ Dental floss
- ➔ Sterile tweezers
- ➔ Small, sharp clipper
- ➔ Q-tips
- ➔ Salt
- ➔ Interproximal brush
- ➔ Toothpicks
- ➔ Topical anesthetic (such as Orabase or Ora-Gel)



<p>A Ligature or module</p> <p>A ligature is a tiny wire and a module is a tiny elastic, both of which can be used to hold the archwire in place on each bracket.</p>	<p>B Archwire</p> <p>These act as a guide or track, along which the teeth are to be moved. They are changed throughout the treatment. Each archwire change brings us closer to an ideal tooth position.</p>	<p>C Brackets</p> <p>These are small square shapes which are cemented directly onto each tooth. The arch wire is then placed through the bracket. we use three types of brackets metal, gold and ceramic.</p>	<p>D Elastic Hooks & Rubber Bands</p> <p>Not every patient needs to wear elastics. These are small rubber bands which are attached to hooks on your brackets to cause a continuous, gentle force to help individual tooth movement or to align one arch to the next. If you are required to use them please note that they are speeding up the day you get your braces off so it is in your best interests to wear them. Teeth have never failed to move when elastics are worn consistently as directed by the orthodontist.</p>
<p>➔ Metal Band (not shown)</p> <p>These are thin bands or rings of metal, carefully fitted to the tooth and then cemented in place. They have either a tube or hook attached so that the wire can be held in place.</p>	<p>➔ Separators (not shown)</p> <p>To make it more comfortable for you, before placing part of your fixed brace, we may need to make space between your back teeth to allow the bands to go into place. Slowly over a few days, separators gently move certain teeth slightly apart to allow us to accurately place bands on your next appointment. This can cause temporary soreness that will go away in a few days. Rinsing with warm salt water can help relieve the soreness. It is important to call the practice for advice if you lose one, or more of the separators.</p>		

EMERGENCY TREATMENTS

See page 2

The following orthodontic emergencies and their treatments are listed in the order of the least severe to the most severe. Only the most severe emergencies may require immediate attention by an orthodontist. The majority of these are easily treated with a follow-up by the patient's orthodontist.



PROTRUDING WIRE

Occasionally, the end of a wire will work itself out of place and irritate the mouth. Use a cotton bud or pencil eraser to push the wire so that it is flat against the tooth. If the wire cannot be moved into a comfortable position, cover it with relief wax supplied in your cleaning pack. In a situation where the wire is causing extreme pain and you are not able to see the orthodontist soon, you may, as a last resort, cut the wire using a sharp pair of nail scissors or clippers. To reduce the possibility of swallowing the snapped piece of wire, use a folded tissue or gauze around the area. Relief wax may still be necessary to provide comfort to the irritated area.



IRRITATION OF LIPS OR CHEEKS

Sometimes new braces can be irritating to the mouth, especially when eating. A small amount of non-medicinal relief wax makes an excellent buffer between brace and mouth which you can find in your cleaning pack. Simply 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. Eating will then become more comfortable (avoid hot drinks as this will melt the wax). If the wax is accidentally ingested, it's not a problem as the wax is harmless.



LOOSE BRACKETS, WIRES OR BANDS

If the braces have come loose in any way, the orthodontist should be called to determine appropriate next steps. Brackets are the parts of braces attached to teeth with a special adhesive. They are generally positioned in the centre of each tooth. The bracket can be knocked off if hard or crunchy foods have been eaten. If the loose bracket has rotated on the wire and is sticking out and you cannot immediately reach the orthodontist, you can do a temporary fix to ease discomfort and prevent further damage. This must only be done as a last resort. Take care to prevent swallowing or other injury. To put the bracket back in place, use clean tweezers to slide the bracket along the wire until it is between two teeth. Rotate the bracket back to the proper position then slide it back to the centre of the tooth.



FOOD CAUGHT BETWEEN TEETH

This is not an emergency, but can be a little uncomfortable. It is easily fixed with dental floss. Try tying a small knot in the middle of the floss to help remove the food, or use your interspace (small headed) brush or toothpick to dislodge food caught between teeth and braces.



LIGATURES COME OFF

Tiny rubber bands or small, fine wires, known as ligatures, hold the wire to the bracket. If a rubber ligature should come off, you may be able to put it back in place using clean tweezers. If a wire ligature comes loose, simply remove it with tweezers. If the wire ligature is sticking out into the lip but is not loose, it can be bent back down with a cotton bud or pencil eraser to eliminate the irritation. When one ligature pops off or breaks, others may follow. Examine all ligatures adjacent to the missing ligature. Please notify your orthodontist to check whether the ligature needs to be replaced.

MOUTH SORES

Some patients are susceptible to episodes of mouth sores. While braces do not cause them, they may be made worse 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 anaesthetic (such as oral Relief gel) directly to the ulcerated surface using a cotton swab. Re-apply this when needed or as directed by the instructions on the product.

DISCOMFORT

It is quite normal to experience discomfort for a day or two after braces or retainers are fitted or adjusted. The discomfort can make eating uncomfortable – this is both normal and temporary. Keep to eating soft foods during this time and use a mild analgesic such as Ibuprofen or paracetamol for the first few days if discomfort is experienced.