

Warford Orthodontics

Specializing in Adult and Child Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics

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FOR THE NEW PATIENT: ADJUSTING TO YOUR BRACES

Congratulations! You've just begun the amazing process of orthodontic treatment.

Major problems seldom occur during orthodontic treatment. However, it is normal to experience some minor discomfort as you adjust to your new braces and/or appliances. Remember, most orthodontic emergencies could be eliminated by maintaining great oral hygiene and by avoiding hard or sticky foods that can damage the brackets and archwires. Listed below are the most common orthodontic problems and how to treat them.

DISCOMFORT: When the first arch wires are placed to get the teeth moving, your teeth may become sensitive. This is true for nearly all patients and will likely subside in a few days.

- ❖ Eat softer foods until you have adjusted to your new appliances.
- ❖ Brush well and often to remove food and plaque. Poor oral hygiene can cause the gum tissue to become irritated and will increase sensitivity.
- ❖ KM Thera-Bite® wafer: We have provided you with a Thera-Bite® wafer. Periodically biting down on the wafer makes the adjustment to braces easier for some people.
- ❖ Take an over-the-counter pain reliever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, if necessary.

IRRITATED TONGUE OR CHEEKS: Initially, your new braces and/or appliances will feel different and you may experience pain of the tongue or inside of the cheeks. To relieve the irritation, we have provided you with orthodontic wax. Using a small piece of wax, form a ball and place it on the offending bracket or wire. This should provide nearly immediate relief, and allow your soft tissues to adapt to the new appliances. Rinsing with warm salt water may also be helpful.

SHARP WIRES: Irritation from sharp wires may occur during your orthodontic treatment. If a wire becomes long or breaks, some people are able to use a small wire cutter or nail clipper to trim the wire. If you have a broken arch wire, you should call to schedule a repair appointment, as they should be fixed within a few days.

LOOSE BANDS OR BRACKETS: The brackets and bands can debond if you eat hard or sticky foods. Please call us so we may adjust the timing of your next appointment. If it is causing discomfort or a problem, such as the inability to wear an elastic, then call to schedule a repair appointment. You are allowed 3 broken brackets during your course of treatment without incurring additional charges to your initial contract. After three breakages, a \$25 fee per bracket charge will apply. This is a significant discount from the \$150 it costs our office to replace the bracket. This fee is subject to change without notice.

ACCIDENTS: If you have experienced a traumatic injury to the face or head, please seek care at a local emergency room. If you are experiencing an orthodontic emergency, please call our office at 255-1311. If the orthodontic emergency occurs on a weekend, our assistants are on-call for limited hours. The dental assistant will visit with you and can determine if you need immediate attention. If so, a time will be set for your repair appointment. The on-call cell phone number is 701-471-2539. Messages can be left on this cell phone at any time. Calls will be answered and returned between 12 noon and 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

SCHEDULING OF APPOINTMENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS

The doctors and staff at Warford Orthodontics place a high emphasis on education. This is demonstrated by our thorough chair-side education for patients and parents. We understand that most parents are hesitant for their child to miss school for any reason. However, it will be necessary for some of your child's appointments to occur during regular school hours. Orthodontic treatment is a health-care issue, and for a few months, it will need to be a high priority in the life of your child.

The majority of orthodontic patients are students. Therefore, if all patients were to be scheduled only during after-school hours, office hours would run late into the night. To ensure fairness in scheduling of appointments for all, we have arranged our appointment schedule in the most practical way possible for our patients and their families. We reserve the before and after school appointments for routine adjustments and progress checkups, which require less time. The longer procedures—such as bandings and diagnostic records appointments, and unexpected emergencies, repairs, and last minute changes—must occur during school hours. Please note that if you must cancel or miss an after-school appointment, the appointment will be rescheduled during school hours.

SPORTS AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

We encourage our patients to pursue and develop their athletic and musical abilities, and orthodontic treatment should not interfere with these activities. Mouth guards must be worn when participating in sports such as football or hockey, as required by the North Dakota High School Association. Mouth guards are also a good idea for many other sports and are suggested. However, playing with and/or chewing on mouth guards will break off brackets, which can inaccurately be blamed on braces. Most musical instruments are acceptable. If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's treatment and a sport or musical instrument, please ask our doctors or assistants.

FOODS TO AVOID DURING ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT

- ❖ Any food or candy that is sticky, hard, or very crunchy.
- ❖ All types of gum, as it weakens the glue and causes jaw muscle pain.
- ❖ Raw fruits and vegetables (carrots and apples) should be cut into bite-sized pieces.
- ❖ Specific foods that are problematic: caramel, taffy, sunflower seeds, beef jerky, licorice, gummy candy, ice, popcorn, nuts, corn chips, corn nuts. This is not a comprehensive list.
- ❖ Non-food items: Do not chew on pencils, toothpicks, or fingernails!

Welcome to Warford Orthodontics! We are pleased to serve you and look forward to getting to know you.

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