

Do your teeth and gums look like this:



Plaque left on tooth surface

Red & swollen gum

Or even worse, like this:



Gum has swollen around the brace

Very swollen gums



They should look like this:

Gum Disease (gingivitis)

This is caused when food, which turns into plaque, is not cleaned off your teeth and gums every day. The plaque irritates your gums and causes gum disease, which is called gingivitis.

Gingivitis is easy to spot. Your gums will be red and swollen and they will bleed easily when brushed.

You can make your gums healthy again by improving your toothbrushing technique and frequency.

It is important to clean around the gum margin as well as the biting edge of your teeth. Food (plaque) builds up between the brace and your gum and this is the area you should concentrate on.

Angle the bristles of your brush into this area and make sure you clean right along the gum margin.



Use a small tufted brush to clean in between the brackets under the wire.



Oral Hygiene

Information Leaflet

Cleaning the biting edge and surface of your teeth is easy and should be done after you have cleaned the difficult areas.

Normally cleaning twice a day is sufficient but with a fixed brace on you should increase this to three times a day.

Decay

Sugar causes decay. If you eat or drink sugar too often your teeth will decay. When you are wearing a fixed brace this can result in white mottled marks (decalcification) on your front teeth around about the brackets. It is very disappointing to finish treatment with straight teeth that are marked because of too much sugar.

Avoid eating or drinking sugar between meals and before bed (juice, irl bru, coke etc). Most damage is done if you snack on sugary items between normal mealtimes.

Erosion

This is different to decay and happens when you drink fizzy juice, still fruit juice, diluting juice, carbonated water etc.

Erosion results in the gradual loss of the enamel surface (the hard outer surface of

your teeth). This makes them thinner and easily damaged; often seen on the edge of the front teeth. The surface becomes glassy smooth. Eventually this will result in the loss of all the enamel.

You should restrict the amount of these drinks you consume and replace them with alternatives such as water, milk, tea (without sugar) etc.

- Use fluoride toothpaste and follow the instructions from the hygienist.



Broken edge

Glassy smooth surface

- Clean your teeth at least twice a day.
- Avoid sugar
- Avoid fizzy juice



White decalcification mark around where the bracket was

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