



## Orthodontic Emergencies

Some minor problems can be handled by yourself at home and would be better for you as you would not need to come out of your way or take your child out of school to attend an appointment. Some problems on the other hand are true emergencies and must be dealt with accordingly.

### *Trauma to the tooth or a broken tooth*

You must contact your regular dentist immediately and inform them what has happened. We are an orthodontic practice and we ONLY deal with braces. We do not have the equipment or materials here to deal with this sort of problem. Once your dentist has assessed the problem if you do have any breakages to the actual brace then please call us to make an appointment.

### *Loose brackets*

These are the metal squares or rectangles that are glued in the middle of your teeth. These brackets can also be tooth coloured.

**This is not a severe emergency** and normally this sort of appointment can wait until your next routine appointment. If a loose bracket is causing you a lot of irritation and you want to relieve it until you can come in then place some orthodontic wax around the area to prevent irritation and minimize movement.

Please remember brackets can become loose and be knocked off due to eating chewy and hard foods as well as being knocked during contact sports if you fail to wear a sports guard.

### *Arch wire ends digging in cheeks*

When the teeth start to move sometimes the ends of the wire will become long at the back and can end up poking into your cheek which can be uncomfortable.

Pop some orthodontic wax on the end of the wire to prevent irritation until you can get an appointment to have it trimmed. If it is so bad that you cannot possibly wait then as a last resort carefully trim the wire yourself using a pair of clean nail scissors or clippers. To avoid swallowing the wire, apply some folded tissue at the back on the area to catch the removed piece.

### *Arch wire out of the tube or slot*

If the wire is very flexible you may be able to place the wire back in using a clean pair of tweezers. If this is not possible then cover with orthodontic wax and call the practice for an appointment.

### *Metal ligature is sticking into lip or cheek*

These are the small metal ties that attach the wire to some of the brackets. If they stick out and are causing you discomfort you can use a pencil eraser or a Q tip to push the ligature flat against the tooth. If you are unable to do this then cover with some orthodontic wax to make it comfortable and contact the practice for an appointment.

### *Rubbing and irritation on lips and cheeks*

Braces can sometimes rub against the cheeks and lips and cause irritation even ulcers until your soft tissues toughen up and eventually get use to the brace. This is when you will need some orthodontic wax. Roll a small amount of wax into a ball and then flatten it against the troublesome area completely. This will protect your lips and cheeks from irritation by making a soft cushion effect. To help the wax stick you can dry the area with some folded tissues before applying the wax. Please don't worry if you swallow any of the wax it is completely harmless!

### *Discomfort*

Don't worry if your teeth feel tender and painful for up to 7 days after braces or retainers have been fitted or adjusted. This is completely normal and will usually settle down. We always encourage a soft diet during this stage and pain relief if needed, take what you would normally have to relieve a headache.