

But Dr. Keller, I Thought You Told Me ...

We want to make sure that you have the correct information so please read the following notes

How Long Will My Teeth Be Sore

Expect the teeth to be somewhat tender the first few days after your braces are adjusted. Take (Ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin) to alleviate the discomfort. Tylenol tends not to be as effective for the tooth soreness but can be substituted if needed. The teeth will bother you when you try to eat, but they will not bother you while you are doing other things. The sooner you start chewing the faster you will adjust. Try not to baby the teeth.

Will the Inside of My Lips Be Sore Forever?

Expect, from time to time, that your cheeks and lips may become irritated. You will eventually build-up a callous. If an ulcer forms, use the wax that we gave you and place it over the braces that seem to be causing the problem. The wax will stay in place even while eating if you make sure that the area is dry before putting the wax in place. Pull off a small piece, roll it up in a little ball and stick it over the braces.

Do I Still Have To See My Dentist for Cleanings and Check-ups

YES, YES, YES. Please continue to see your dentist for regularly scheduled cleanings. Some people even need to go more than every six months to stay on top of things. This is very important.

Why Did I Get This Space between My Front Teeth

Sometimes things look worse before they will look better. The teeth will move in different directions as the teeth are straightening out. You may see a space between your two front teeth that was never there before or teeth that seemed perfectly straight before the braces were placed may not seem as straight. Please be patient and things will start to improve. That space will close and those teeth will line up, I promise. In order to straighten the worst of the teeth, the straighter teeth may be pulled out of alignment but eventually they all work together to give you that great smile we are all working towards.

I Was Only Eating Mashed Potatoes When the Brace Broke Off

Sometimes braces do not break off immediately after they are loosened. Sometimes that hard candy, bagel, or pizza crust weakens the glue but not enough for it to come off. The next thing you know the bracket pops off while you're sitting in class or eating something soft. The important thing is that you call us ASAP to let us know (not necessary on the weekends, ha, ha). The brace does not necessarily have to be replaced right away but we want to know about it, even if you leave a message on the recorder. If you wait until the day of your appointment to tell us you have a brace off, we may not be able to fix it. If we know ahead of time we can make arrangements.

My Teeth Are Loose, Is This Okay, Are They Going To Fall Out

Yes, this is all right so do not worry about them falling out, unless it is a baby tooth of course. We want them to get loose so that we can move them around. If they get too loose we will let you know but this is rare.

How Much Longer Will the Braces Be On?

Remember, the time we told you is a rough estimate. It could take a little longer or a little shorter. A lot of what happens depends on you. If you do not wear the elastics, plan on adding time. If you like to chew gum, plan on adding time. Missed some appointments, plan on adding time. If you continuously break braces, plan on adding time. If you go away for the summer, plan on adding time. Even if all goes smoothly, it could take awhile longer. No two people have teeth that move the same way and we do not want to rush the final result. Asking at each visit, "How much longer" will not help you get your braces off any earlier. But, no one can blame you for trying!