

# TEETH AND BRACE FRIENDLY FOOD AND DRINK



If you are wearing braces, your diet is definitely going to need to change so you do not damage your teeth and your braces.

Food and plaque that are not cleaned off your teeth may lead to permanent and unsightly marks on your teeth and tooth decay.

## What is tooth decay?

When you eat or drink anything (but particularly sugary items), the bacteria (plaque) in your mouth produce acid. This acid can make holes in your teeth (tooth decay). Your teeth will be under attack from this plaque acid for up to one hour after eating food or drinking sugary drinks.



*Decayed teeth*

## Diet and braces

A careful diet is essential when you are wearing braces. Braces and wires are fragile and eating the wrong foods can break your braces and/or damage your teeth. Broken or loose braces will lengthen your treatment as your teeth will not move correctly with a broken brace.

### Do I need to change my eating habits?

Choose foods which are softer. Soon after you get your braces fitted and sometimes when they are adjusted, you may want foods that need little or no chewing such as soup, pasta dishes, yoghurts and cheese. This is because the teeth will be more tender to bite on. This may last a few days. Cut up sandwiches, fruit and vegetables rather than biting into them.

### Can I eat snacks?

Eating 3 meals a day instead of snacking is better for your health and teeth.

### What food and drinks can I eat between meals?

Select healthy foods to eat if you are hungry between meals. These include: wholemeal bread, plain cheese, dry crackers, breadsticks, fruit and vegetables.

When you are thirsty, plain milk or plain water (not fizzy) are good choices. Fruit juices should be kept to mealtimes only.



### What happens if I keep damaging my brace?

Your orthodontist can offer advice. If you regularly damage your braces, you will lengthen your treatment time. If you want to keep your orthodontic treatment time as short as possible, follow a diet of softer food to make sure that your braces do not break.

A good balanced, healthy diet and excellent oral hygiene are very important during orthodontic treatment to maintain strong and healthy teeth.



The BOS has produced a brace friendly recipe leaflet to give you lots of ideas about healthy food and drinks. It is available to download for free from [www.bos.org.uk](http://www.bos.org.uk)