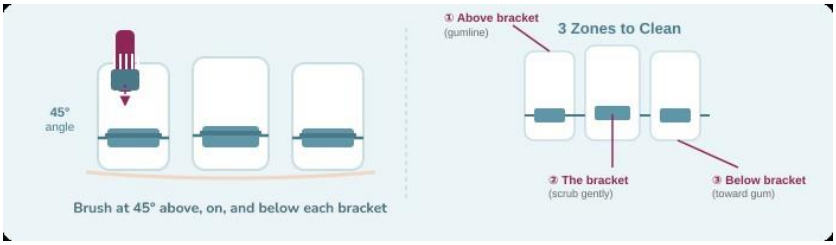
Redwood Pediatric Dentistry
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Braces Care: Keeping Teeth Healthy During Orthodontic Treatment

Braces work best when teeth stay healthy underneath them! Good daily habits during orthodontic treatment protect enamel, prevent cavities around brackets, and mean a beautiful smile when braces come off □

1 □ Daily Essentials

- **Brush 2 to 3 times per day:** morning, after school, and **especially before bed.**
  - Use an electric toothbrush if possible. Research shows they remove more plaque around brackets than manual brushing.
  - A small angled toothbrush helps reach completely above and below each bracket.
  - Set a 2 minute timer, or 5 minutes for braces to do each zone properly!
- **Water flosser (Waterpik):** a must-have, especially if traditional flossing isn't happening. Use on **setting 7 or higher** for best results.
- **Floss daily:** Use ortho flossers like Superfloss or ortho floss picks. Keep them **everywhere**, in the car, backpack, and desk, so there's never an excuse!
- **Toothpaste:** Use prescription fluoride toothpaste (like Prevident), hydroxyapatite toothpaste, or both for maximum enamel protection.
- **MI Paste:** Supports enamel repair and helps with sensitivity around brackets. □ **Contains milk protein (casein). Not suitable for milk allergies.**
- **Lighted mirror:** A bright makeup mirror is a game-changer for spotting plaque hiding around brackets.



2 ✨ Helpful Habits

- **Drink water after every snack or meal** to rinse away sugars and acids before they can attack enamel.
- **Plaque disclosing tablets:** Great for visual learners! Use once a week to light up any spots being missed. Kids love them.
- **Invisalign users:** Always brush food off teeth before putting trays back in. Trays trap everything against enamel, so this step is non-negotiable.
- **Traditional braces + gum:** Skip it. Gum sticks to brackets and is hard to clean. Invisalign patients can chew **sugar-free gum** to stimulate saliva between meals.
- **Make it fun:** Incentives work! Some families use small rewards or have teens contribute toward treatment costs if hygiene slips.
- **Brushing station:** Keep all supplies together and visible on the counter. Hygiene improves when it's easy and visible.

A quick motivation trick

Google “cavities around braces” together for some honest visual motivation. It works!

3 Smart Snacks

- **Limit carbs:** chips, crackers, sticky snacks, and candy all feed cavity-causing bacteria, and they get trapped in brackets easily.
- **Watch acidic drinks:** Even sugar-free options like Gatorade or flavored sparkling water erode enamel. Check pH online and aim for close to neutral (7).
- **Great snack choices:** meats, veggies, cheeses, nuts (if age and allergy appropriate), and calcium-rich foods all support strong enamel.
- **Hard or crunchy foods:** Avoid anything that could pop off brackets, like hard candy, ice, raw carrots, popcorn, and crusty bread.

4 Extra Cleaning During Treatment

- **More frequent cleanings:** We recommend professional cleanings every 3 to 4 months during orthodontic treatment to stay ahead of buildup.
- **Wire removal for cleanings:** Coordinate with your orthodontist to remove wires before cleaning appointments for a much more thorough cleaning.
    - Schedule: wires removed at orthodontist → cleaning and X-rays at Redwood Pediatric Dentistry → back to orthodontist.

Questions or concerns? We’re here for you!

If you notice white spots forming around brackets, bleeding gums that don’t improve, or anything that worries you, don’t wait until the next appointment. Call or message us.

(510) 413-7600 • team@redwoodpediatricdentist.com

References

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