

ADVICE SHEET

DIET



**WEAR
SIDE
ORTHODONTIC
CENTRE**

A Brace Friendly Balanced Diet

During orthodontic treatment a brace friendly diet is a must; limiting foods and drinks that could increase your risk of tooth decay is essential. You should avoid anything that might damage your teeth as well as your orthodontic appliance.

Frequently breaking your braces will add to the overall treatment time.

Softer foods are favourable and harder foods must be cut into manageable bite size pieces and chewed with the back teeth to minimize breakage of the orthodontic appliance.

Which foods/drinks should I avoid?

- **Chewy foods:** hard rolls, liquorice, toffees, chewy bars, jellies, cereal bars
- **Crunchy foods:** popcorn, pizza crusts, iced lollies
- **Sticky foods:** caramels, chewing gum
- **Hard foods:** nuts, sweets
- **All fizzy drinks:** sports drinks, flavoured water, energy drinks

Which foods/drinks should I avoid between meals?

- **Sweet / sugary foods:** cakes and puddings, biscuits, chocolate
- **Dried fruit**
- **Fresh fruit juices:** apple, pineapple, lemon or orange
- **Smoothies**

Why should I avoid sugary foods and drinks between meals?

Every time you eat or drink something sugary, the bacteria in your mouth will produce acid. Acid attacks can last for up to an hour after eating or drinking. The more often you eat or drink something sugary, the more likely you are to cause tooth decay.

Try to cut down the number of times you have sugary foods or drinks by keeping these to mealtimes. Avoid sugary snacks like cakes, sweets and biscuits between meals. Avoid sugary drinks like fruit squashes, natural fruit juices and milk shakes between meals. When consuming ensure they are part of a meal instead of a snack to limit tooth decay.

Why are fizzy and acidic drinks bad for my teeth?

Fruit juices, sports drinks and fizzy drinks (even sugar-free ones) contain acids. These acids can dissolve the outer surface of the teeth (enamel). This is called erosion. The teeth become thinner and are more likely to chip. They may also become sensitive. The more often you drink fizzy or acidic drinks, the more likely you are to damage your teeth.

What can I drink between meals?

Plain still water and milk are best for your teeth.

What can I eat between meals?

Sugar free or low sugar foods are best. Suggestions include bread, breadsticks, rice cakes, wraps, pitta bread, pancakes, savoury scones, cheese, cooked meats, vegetables, yogurt or fruit.

Softer foods are favourable and harder foods must be cut into manageable bite size pieces and chewed with the back teeth to minimize breakage of the orthodontic appliance. Remember, it's not just what you eat, but also when you eat it.

Frequent snacking on sugary foods is worse than eating those foods with a non-sugary meal. The more chances you give the bacteria to turn sugars into acids, the higher your risk of tooth decay.