

I'm not a robot





























TMJ pain is a common symptom of TMD. TMJ stands for the temporomandibular joint where your lower jaw connects to your skull. TMD stands for temporomandibular joint disorder, meaning that there is a problem with the joint. TMD is characterized by pain in the jaw that can be persistent or occur when you open your mouth or bite down. There are a few different ways to get TMJ pain relief. What works for you may depend on the severity of your case.What Causes TMJ Disorder (TMD)?In order to understand the treatment for TMJ disorder, it helps to understand the cause. TMJ disorder is caused by overuse or stress of some kind to the joint. Chronic teeth grinding or clenching can put strain on the TMJ, as well as an injury to the jaw that may have thrown the jaw out of alignment. Orthodontic conditions such as overbite, underbite, crossbite, or open bite can lead to TMJ pain. When the upper and lower jaw don't meet up properly, it can result in TMJ disorder.Treatment for TMJ pain can be divided into 3 levels:Level 1 Treatment: Home RemediesThe first steps to take when you have TMJ pain are some basic things you can do at home:Apply ice to the affected area to reduce swelling and inflammation.Rest your jaw as much as possible. Avoid talking, yawning, and anything else that causes you to open your mouth very widely.Eat soft foods or a liquid diet that doesn't require chewing.Take anti-inflammatory over the counter pain relievers, such as ibuprofen, Level 2 Treatment: Professional HelpIf the home remedies don't provide relief, or if your pain persists after several weeks, seek professional help. A Family Orthodontist can provide the following professional diagnosis of TMJ disorder.Create a custom mouthguard to absorb the impact of teeth grinding and clenching to reduce stress on the jaw and TMJ.Provide orthodontic treatment to straighten the teeth and realign the bite to prevent strain on the TMJ. Orthodontic treatment can provide long-term prevention of TMJ disorder.Level 3 Treatment: SurgeryWhen no other treatment options have been effective, you may benefit from surgical intervention. The joint may need to be reconstructed from the inside to restore proper alignment of the jaw and remove any scar tissue from long-term joint damage. Surgery is only recommended as a last resort when other treatments have failed to provide relief. TMJ surgery can often provide permanent relief of your jaw pain.Why See an Orthodontist for TMJ Disorder?There are benefits of going to an orthodontist for TMJ treatment. While some remedies and treatments only provide temporary relief, orthodontic treatment gets to the source of the problem to provide permanent relief of TMJ symptoms. If your TMJ disorder is caused by misalignment of the teeth or bite, orthodontic treatment can correct the problem. Braces, Invisalign, or other orthodontic appliances can reposition your teeth and reshape your jaw so that the upper and lower jaw meet together properly with the bite force distributed evenly across all of your teeth. Orthodontic treatment provides a wide variety of dental and oral health benefits.Hass Family Orthodontics Provides TMJ TreatmentIf you have pain in your jaw, face, head, or ears it may be due to TMJ disorder. It is also common to have limited range of motion in your jaw, preventing you from opening and closing your mouth freely. We can diagnose and treat your TMD, providing long-term relief by treating the condition at the source of the problem.Call 828-464-5300 today to schedule or request an appointment.Metal or ceramic braces require a commitment. They're designed to gradually change the position of your teeth to close gaps, correct overlaps, or straighten crooked teeth. They can also help improve some bite problems, making it more comfortable for you to chew and speak.Are you wondering how long your commitment to improving your smile with braces will last? If so, we have the information you need to make a smart decision for your dental health and lifestyle.How Long Do Braces Take to Work?You can expect to wear traditional braces for a minimum of 12 months. The treatment process often lasts for 18 months and may go up to 24 months or longer. It depends on the problems you're trying to correct among other personal factors.In general, adults tend to wear braces longer than most children and teenagers. They often address more serious dental issues and may have gone many years without seeking dental care or treatment for their problem.To determine how long you may need to wear braces, discuss the treatment process with an orthodontist. A trained professional will analyze your unique needs and dental history to determine the most effective course of treatment. They may not give you a definite length of time, but they should have a general expectation of what it will take to correct your issues.Why Do Braces Take So Long?To understand why braces take a year or longer to work their magic, think about what they're trying to accomplish. They're designed to apply gentle pressure on your teeth in order to close gaps, correct overlaps, or straighten crooked teeth. They can also correct alignment problems with your teeth and/or jaw.It takes time to correct these problems. The more severe the issue, the longer the process may take.Braces aren't an immediate solution to your dental problems. They don't offer fast results like surgery. They require a lengthy commitment, but you will end up with a beautiful smile and can boost your confidence for years to come.Are There Faster Alternatives to Traditional Braces?Invisalign is the most popular alternative to braces today. Instead of wearing metal braces on your teeth for a year or longer, you wear removable trays made from BPA-free plastic. These aligners are more comfortable than braces for most people and allow you to take them out while eating or brushing your teeth.Invisalign is often a faster process than braces. On average, patients wear the aligners for 12 months. The length of time you may need to wear Invisalign aligners is personal, so you should check with an orthodontist if you want to compare these options. There are some limitations for Invisalign. The more severe your dental issues, the more likely your orthodontist will recommend traditional braces over clear plastic aligners.How to Avoid Damage From BracesYou or your orthodontist should start by calling us to schedule an appointment with a local orthodontist. You can also start with a cleaning by your dentist. That allows you to ask questions regarding your dental concerns and the effectiveness of braces for your issues. They can refer you to an orthodontist if they agree that braces can help.To learn more or to get started on your orthodontic treatment, call Hass Family Orthodontics today at 828-464-5300. Or, request an appointment online.How can financial brands set themselves apart through visual storytelling?Our experts explainhow.Learn MoreThe Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to today's most recentcoverage.Discover The CollectionCurated, compelling, and worth your time. Explore our latest gallery of EditorsPicks.Browse Editors' FavoritesHow can financial brands set themselves apart through visual storytelling?Our experts explainhow.Learn MoreThe Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to today's most recentcoverage.Discover The CollectionCurated, compelling, and worth your time. Explore our latest gallery of EditorsPicks.Browse Editors' FavoritesA dentist or orthodontist may recommend braces to align or straighten your teeth, or help with another dental problem like a gap, underbite, or overbite. Braces can drastically improve your teeth, but it can take days or weeks to adjust to the extra pressure on your teeth. You may also feel some pain or irritation around your teeth and gums during the first few days.But if you talk with anyone who has braces, the hardest adjustment might be giving up some of the foods you love. Certain foods are off-limits while wearing braces, because they can become stuck in the braces and damage them. Here's a look at some of the best and worst foods to eat with braces, as well as what to do if you damage your braces.Getting braces doesn't hurt, but your mouth may be irritable in the days following treatment. Therefore, eating foods that have a rough texture and can cause plaque buildup on your teeth is one way to avoid damage. Make sure you brush your teeth at least three times a day, preferably after each meal, using a soft-bristled toothbrush. Pay extra attention to the spaces around your braces and remove any food particles that get stuck in the braces. You may also have to avoid sticky foods, which can be difficult to remove from your teeth. If you have braces, you should know what foods to avoid getting braces. Plenty of foods are fine to eat with braces. However, some safe foods might not be ideal immediately after getting braces, since they can irritate your mouth, causing too much pressure and sensitivity. Foods to avoid right after getting braces include:ice creamthick rolls or breadstickthick cuts of meatspicy foodscitrus foodsYou'll be able to eat these items once you adjust to having braces.Be mindful that braces are sensitive to damage, so you'll need to avoid certain foods for as long as you have braces. These include sticky and hard foods that can damage the wires or bands, or cause a bracket to separate from a tooth. Foods to completely avoid with braces include:popcornnutsicechewing gumhard candychevy candypizza crustbagels and other hard rollscrunchy vegetables and fruits hard crackers pretzels/saltinesAlso, limit consumption of sugary foods and drinks while having braces. When sugar mixes with saliva, it creates a sticky film (plaque) that coats the teeth. Brushing can remove plaque, but that becomes harder to do with braces. And if you're unable to remove this sticky film, there's a risk of tooth decay. So, while the occasional sweet treat is OK, limit yourself to only a few sugary foods and beverages a week.During the time you have braces, you'll have periodic appointments with your orthodontist to adjust your braces. Other issues can occur between regular adjustments, like a loose or broken wire or band. Eat sticky or crunchy foodsapart from your braceshave an injury to your mouthIf you have any issues with your braces, make an appointment with your orthodontist right away. Ignoring the damage or delaying a repair could potentially slow your treatment time.Dont pull or bend a broken wire or bracket. You could cause more damage. Instead, place a piece of wet cotton or orthodontic wax over the sharp edge to see a dentist or orthodontist.Maintaining good oral hygiene is one way to avoid damage. Make sure you brush your teeth at least three times a day, preferably after each meal, using a soft-bristled toothbrush. Pay extra attention to the spaces around your braces and remove all traces of food. Use floss to clean between your teeth, as well as a floss threader, to remove food particles from between braces and wires.It's not only important to see your orthodontist, but also your dentist for regular cleanings and checkups. Dental cleanings are essential to remove any plaque buildup, which contributes to cavities and gum disease. Orthodontist appointments ensure that your braces remain properly fitted. Your dentist may also recommend using a fluoride mouthwash to help strengthen your teeth and lower the risk of tooth decay.Learning different chewing techniques can also prevent damage to braces. Instead of chewing food with your front teeth, it might be easier to chew with your back teeth, which are stronger. This can prevent damage to your braces when eating thicker breads or meats. Getting braces can improve your teeth. But if you eat the wrong types of food and dont maintain good dental hygiene, theres the risk of damaging your braces and teeth.Your dentist or orthodontist will discuss what foods to avoid. If you have any questions, dont hesitate to ask. Damaging your braces could prolong your treatment, meaning you'll have to wear them for a longer period of time. What can you eat with braces? Can you eat chocolate with braces? Are there foods you need to avoid completely with braces? Are you stuck eating only soft foods until you get your braces off? These are all questions you may find yourself searching the internet for when you first get your braces on. The good news there are plenty of tasty foods you can eat while wearing braces, and no, youre not limited to only soft or pureed foods. But it is important to be aware of the foods you can eat and cant eat so you take care of your braces correctly, and get the best results from your orthodontic treatment. Why Certain Foods Need to Be Avoided If You Have Braces Your orthodontist will instruct you to be cautious with your eating habits when you get braces, and for good reason. Your braces have brackets, bands, and archwires that can catch and damage your braces. Eating the wrong foods could result in damage to the braces. Along with damage to your braces, avoiding certain foods is also essential to preventing tooth decay. When you have braces, its easier for food to get trapped between the braces and your teeth. This is why proper brushing and flossing during orthodontic treatment are important. If you dont properly dislodge any food particles, youre risking not only cavities but also plaque and tartar, which can cause your teeth to stain. This is a concern for many braces patients because when the braces come off, the staining is only around the teeth surface not covered by the braces. Due to this pattern of staining, Teeth whitening after braces is becoming increasingly popular to correct any discoloration that may have occurred during orthodontic treatment. Foods You Cant Eat with Braces While youre wearing braces, youll need to avoid certain foods until youre done with your treatment. This will ensure your braces dont get damaged during meal time. Do you know what foods you can eat and cant eat with braces? Here are some potentially harmful foods most patients inquire about: Can I Eat Popcorn with Braces? Crunchy foods, such as popcorn, have the ability to loosen bands, knock off brackets, and bend wires on your braces. They also can get stuck in your braces, resulting in tooth decay or pain. Crunchy foods to use caution or stay away from include: Pretzels Popcorn Celery other crunchy veggies Most chips Nuts Hardshell tacos Can I Eat Hard Candy with Braces? Hard foods can also damage braces, and they can hurt your teeth, too, particularly if youve had a recent adjustment or you just got your braces. Hard foods to avoid include: Hard candies (including lollipops and candy canes) Some raw veggies, like carrots Peanut brittle Biscuits or hard cookies Hard rolls Ice Can I Eat Corn on the Cob with Braces? Its difficult to manage eating foods that you bite into with your front teeth when youre wearing braces. Doing so can bend wires or loosen brackets. Avoid foods like: Corn on the cob (cut corn off the cob and eat) Chicken wings Whole pears and apples Whole pickles Ribs Can I Eat Pizza with Braces? Very chewy foods, like pizza crust, can be disastrous for your braces. They can get stuck in brackets and may be tough to eat. Youll want to steer clear of eating large pieces of chewy meat (instead, cut into very small pieces) Bagels Beef jerky Pizza crust Can I Eat Sticky Candy with Braces? Sugary and sticky foods are always bad for teeth, even if you dont have braces. But, theyre a more significant problem if you have braces because sticky foods can get stuck to braces, and they can be tough to get off your teeth, leaving you susceptible to cavities. Items that are off-limits include: Caramels Licorice Taffy Gummy bears Bubble gum (sugar-free gum in moderation is okay) Fruit Roll-ups Foods You Can Eat with Braces Now that you know what you cant eat, what about what you can eat with braces? While there are foods you need to avoid when you have braces, there are plenty of tasty foods that you can enjoy. The following are some great choices: Meat with No Bones Avoid eating meat off the bone, but most meats are fine if you have braces. Your orthodontist will likely recommend that you cut the meat into smaller bites as a precautionary tip. Pastas, Potatoes, and Some Breads Do you love carbs? Most types of pasta, potatoes, and breads are safe to eat with braces. Just avoid chewy or hard breads, like tough rolls or chewy bagels, which may damage your braces due to the force needed to chew them. Soft Veggies While you may need to skip the crunchy raw veggies, soft veggies are perfect for snacking when undergoing braces treatment. You can boil or cook harder vegetables, like carrots, to make them easier to chew. Many Fresh Fruits Fresh fruit is a refreshing snack choice for braces patients. Most patients enjoy fruits like bananas, blueberries, or strawberries, which are soft and easy to chew. We recommended avoiding whole apples or other hard fruits. If youre craving an apple or pear, instead, cut the fruit into thin slices to enjoy safely. Soups Soup makes a filling meal for braces patients, especially if youre new braces and your mouth is still adjusting. When your braces are fresh or if youve just had an adjustment, your teeth may feel too sore to chew much. Dairy Products Dairy products like yogurt, milk, and soft cheeses are all safe if you have braces. Like any foods consumed with braces, just make sure you brush and floss to remove any food particles from your teeth. Certain Types of Candy in Moderation While hard candies and sticky candies are totally off-limits, certain types of candy and sweets can be enjoyed in moderation. An occasional peanut butter cup, chocolate, or marshmallows are fine. Since sugar can help fuel cavity-causing bacteria, make sure to clean teeth and braces well after indulging. Even though you can still enjoy a wide variety of foods, when you choose Laster Orthodontics for your orthodontic treatment experience, we make sure all our braces patients are well equipped with the knowledge they need to enjoy their day-to-day life with braces. Remember, what you eat now has a big impact on your treatment outcome, so steer clear of off-limit foods in the short-term to enjoy the best results. If you have any questions about the foods you should or shouldnt eat, make sure you contact Dr. Laster for any concerns you may have. At Laster Orthodontics, we help families develop healthy, life-changing smiles using customized treatments, cutting-edge technologies, and caring relationships. Our individualized treatment plans help our patients achieve their perfect smile in the quickest, most painless way possible by utilizing a wide range of options from traditional braces to Propel accelerated treatment to Dr. Lasters in-house aligner program, Laster Perfect Smile. With three locations throughout the Triangle Area, we create life-changing smiles every day. Getting braces is a big step toward achieving a beautiful smile, but it also means adapting your eating habits. Knowing what foods are braces-friendly isnt just about preventing uncomfortable situationsits crucial for protecting your orthodontic hardware and ensuring your treatment stays on track. During your time with braces, your food choices directly impact your comfort level and treatment success. This guide will walk you through which foods to avoid, what you can safely enjoy, and practical strategies for handling meals in various situations. Youll learn how to navigate food challenges after adjustments, prepare school lunches, and satisfy cravings without damaging your braces. Why Food Choices Matter When You Have Braces When your orthodontist emphasizes food restrictions, theyre not trying to make your life difficulttheyre helping protect your investment. Eating the wrong foods can damage your braces, prolong your treatment, and cause discomfort. To help you navigate this, weve compiled a comprehensive guide to braces-friendly foods, categorized by how they affect your braces. Weve also included tips on how to eat safely with braces, so you can enjoy your treatment journey without unnecessary stress. Understanding what foods are braces-friendly helps you make informed choices that protect your investment and ensure the best results from your treatment. Proper selections help minimize discomfort, especially after adjustments. Braces-friendly foods reduce your risk of developing cavities around brackets. Smart choices help maintain good oral hygiene during treatment. The right foods can even help soothe soreness after adjustments. Remember, these dietary adjustments are temporary, but their impact on your treatment success is significant. How Damaged Braces Affect Your Treatment Timeline When brackets or wires break, your teeth arent being guided properly until repairs are made. Even minor damage can create meaningful setbacks: A single broken bracket might extend your treatment time by 1-2 weeks. Multiple incidents of damage throughout your treatment can add up to several extra months in braces. Common damage scenarios include: Brackets popping off when biting into hard candy or apples Wires bending from chewing ice or nuts Rubber bands stretching or breaking when eating sticky foods Spacers dislodging from biting into tough meats Each repair appointment redirects your treatment from progress to maintenance, essentially pressing pause on your journey to a straighter smile. The Connection Between Braces Pain and What You Eat Your food choices can either amplify or relieve discomfort with braces. After adjustments, your teeth and gums become temporarily sensitive as they respond to the new pressure. Hard, crunchy foods require more jaw force, which can intensify this discomfort. Softer foods require less chewing pressure, allowing sensitive teeth to rest. Cold foods like yogurt and ice cream can actually provide natural pain relief by numbing sore areas. Meanwhile, warm, soft foods like mashed potatoes offer comfort without requiring much chewing effort. Understanding this connection gives you a degree of control over your comfort level throughout treatment. Foods You Should Never Eat with Braces Protecting your braces means being vigilant about avoiding certain problematic foods. Knowing which items pose the greatest risk helps you make better choices and prevents unnecessary damage. Foods to Avoid: Hard Foods: Anything hard enough to crack a nut, break a cookie, or bend a wire is off-limits. This includes hard candies, ice cream sticks, and certain types of bread. Chewy Foods: Sticky, stretchy items like caramel, taffy, and gum can pull on brackets and wires, potentially dislodging them. Crunchy Foods: Foods that require a lot of chewing, like popcorn, nuts, and raw vegetables, can get stuck in brackets and cause discomfort. Sugary Foods: While not strictly off-limits, sugary foods can increase the risk of cavities and staining. Avoiding these foods helps protect your investment and ensures the best results from your treatment. Foods to Eat: Soft Foods: Anything that can be easily chewed without requiring a lot of effort is a good choice. Examples include yogurt, smoothies, and soups. Bland Foods: Foods that are easy on the stomach and dont cause irritation are ideal. Examples include plain pasta, rice, and bananas. Hydrating Foods: Foods that keep you hydrated are important for overall health. Examples include water, milk, and smoothies. Braces-Friendly Foods: Foods that are easy to eat and dont cause irritation are ideal. Examples include plain pasta, rice, and bananas. Hydrating Foods: Foods that keep you hydrated are important for overall health. Examples include water, milk, and smoothies. Braces-Friendly Foods: Foods that are easy to eat and dont cause irritation are ideal. Examples include plain pasta, rice, and bananas. Hydrating Foods: Foods that keep you hydrated are important for overall health. Examples include water, milk, and smoothies. 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