

## **Patient Performance Protocols for Young and Adolescent Patients**

Orthodontic treatment is intimately tied to a patient's ability and efforts to maintain oral health and appliance integrity during treatment. Poor oral hygiene and excessive appliance breakage can have an adverse effect upon treatment duration and the quality of the outcome. Extensive restorative work to repair cavities following treatment is something we all seek to avoid.

It is our goal to motivate and instruct our patients to properly maintain their oral hygiene and appliances during treatment. Part of this process is our hygiene rating system to give feedback at every appointment. When difficulties arise we have developed a process to address concerns in a respectful, non-confrontational and supportive manner.

### **Oral Hygiene**

We endeavor to see all our patients 2-3 weeks following bracket placement to ensure hygiene techniques are being employed properly. During the course of treatment if oral hygiene becomes unacceptable (a rating of 2 or less), hygiene instruction will be the focus of the appointment, and the patient will be seen in 2 weeks to assess for improvement. This is a special oral hygiene check appointment and if no improvement is noted, parents and/or guardians will be involved. An additional oral hygiene appointment visit is then booked in 2 weeks with parents and the patient. If still no improvement is made, wires will be removed and the dentist will be notified. An additional appointment will be booked. If no improvement is forthcoming we will recommend removing braces and discontinuing treatment before irretrievable damage is done to the teeth.

### **Appliance Breakage**

Some breakage is inevitable during treatment. The average number of emergency visits during a 2-year treatment for all problems averages out at 2 per patient. Following repeated broken appliances and patient counseling on diet and care, we will involve parents in the process (e.g. similarly to the hygiene sequence). After 5 appointments with appliance breakage, we will charge a fee for repair as a final measure to induce cooperation.

There is a point where this breakage may compromise treatment to the point where a final parent/patient consult is warranted and a change in treatment, treatment time and possible discontinuation of treatment will be discussed.