

## What do braces or Invisalign have to do with cavities?

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Orthodontic appliances increase the risk of the bacterial infection that causes cavities (caries) and white spot lesions

Preventing the bacterial infection is imperative to an excellent orthodontic result

Protect your investment by using fluoride, xylitol, and pH+ dental products

Don't get white spots! See below for more information



Braces or orthodontic appliances are a great way to straighten teeth, but can put you at risk for decay. Braces create many areas that harbour plaque bacteria and make teeth much harder to adequately clean.

The acids produced by these bacteria can not only cause decay, but in the absence of cavities can still cause unsightly "white spot lesions" or areas of demineralised enamel surrounding the brackets. This means that while your teeth may be straight when you finish braces, they may be irreparably discoloured when the brackets are removed.

- If possible, seek a dentist and/or orthodontist who can identify your risk for the infection that causes cavities prior to seeking orthodontic treatment.
- Discuss your risk for caries with your dentist and/or orthodontist. Use an electric toothbrush like Sonicare, Ultreo, or Braun while in braces to aid in cleaning.

- Use a floss threader or SuperFloss to adequately remove bacteria between teeth and around brackets. Use alkaline pH, fluoride, and xylitol products to decrease the damage that may be caused by bacteria while in braces. For more information on caring for your teeth while in braces see recommendations by The British Orthodontic Society [www.bos.org.uk](http://www.bos.org.uk)

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