

Oops, I Broke a Bracket!

Brackets can sometimes come loose during the course of orthodontic treatment.

There are generally two reasons for this:

1. If the bracket comes off within four to six weeks from the time it was glued to the tooth, it may have been slightly wet during bonding. Even moisture from the patient's breath can contaminate the bonding of the bracket to the tooth. This is normal in the course of orthodontic treatment. Most patients have at least one bracket come loose during treatment.
2. If the bracket comes off after four to six weeks from the time it was glued to the tooth, the most likely cause is that the patient ate something unadvised that popped the bracket off. Bad hygiene can also contribute to brackets coming loose.



What to do if you have a loose bracket?

1. Most often the loose bracket is not noticed right away. As soon as you notice a loose bracket, call the office on the next business day if the loose bracket is not causing any discomfort. If there is discomfort, call the office and the answering machine will direct you to an emergency number.
2. If there is no discomfort, it is still important to call the office during business hours to let us know that you have a bracket off so we are prepared for when you do come in. If the patient is scheduled for a short appointment and we are unaware of a loose bracket, we may not have enough time to rebond the bracket. This can cause delays in treatment.



What happens if we notice a loose bracket at a short adjustment appointment?

We will do our best, however if the appointment is scheduled before or after school hours we may not be able to extend the appointment time. In that instance, we will need to reschedule as soon as possible – usually within the week. We understand that this can cause scheduling problems, however to keep treatment on time it is best to bond the bracket back on as soon as possible.



How can you prevent loose brackets?

1. Do your best to follow our instructions during the bonding process.
2. Do not eat hard or sticky foods or chew on ice, pens, etc.
3. Have good oral hygiene. Brush in the morning, after meals and before bed.
4. Do not pick at or pry the braces off of your teeth.

Take Note