

The two reasons orthodontic treatment takes longer than predicted are non-compliance and broken brackets.

Non-Compliance – This refers to not following instructions when it comes to using such things as headgear and rubber bands (elastics). The patient will be given specific instruction in how to place the rubber bands and will be expected to be able to place them themselves before being dismissed from that appointment.

Once initially instructed to use rubber bands, the teeth will become tender, similar to how the teeth felt when the braces were first placed. With continued use, the tenderness will subside just as the teeth did from the initial brace placement. The big mistake is to remove the bands to eliminate tenderness. In this way the teeth never accommodate to the rubber bands and get tender more frequently.

Rubber bands come in all different force values and can run in multiple directions. They are usually worn all the time, i.e. 24/7, and changed once or twice daily. Length of time using rubber bands varies from patient to patient. Three months to twelve months is the range with the understanding that this length of time is usually reduced if they are used according to instructions. It's common after prolonged use to be instructed to use the rubber bands at night only. This is usually after correction has been achieved and the patient is in a stabilizing mode.

Broken Brackets – Brackets are the braces that are attached to each tooth. The teeth are specially prepared and the doctor places the brackets on each tooth. Bracket placement is crucial to obtain efficient treatment and optimal results. While some orthodontic offices delegate this duty to an assistant, in this office Dr. Frank will be the only one to perform this procedure.

Brackets are held onto the enamel of the teeth with very high-tech dental materials. The only way brackets become detached from teeth is by a force level higher than the sheer bond strength of this adhesive. This means biting hard objects, i.e., pens, pencils, ice, foreign objects, and eating hard foods such as hard pretzels, biting hard candies, popcorn, jerky, etc. Brackets will not become detached by brushing teeth.

In the event that a bracket does become loose, it's not the end of the world. We would appreciate a call letting us know so we can make the necessary arrangements to replace it. If it is only one or two brackets, we have no problem replacing them at the earliest convenience. Three or more (and this is rare) may require an earlier appointment.

Each bracket is specially designed and contoured to fit each individual tooth. If a bracket comes loose, please be sure to bring it with you for your repair appointment. We can sterilize and prepare the bracket for replacement. Failure to bring the bracket will result in a replacement charge of \$50.00 per bracket. We NEVER interchange brackets between different patients, NEVER, EVER!

The clear braces are a nice choice for patients desiring a more cosmetic approach to orthodontic treatment. However, there is a \$50.00 charge per tooth for using these types of braces. We commonly do the upper six front teeth for an additional \$300.00. Placing these on the lower front teeth adds to the cost and some patients are better off not having them.

Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the above information.

I have read the above information regarding compliance and broken brackets.

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Patient or Parent/Guardian