

What is an Orthodontic Emergency?

True orthodontic emergencies are rare. If the patient is experiencing **severe pain** or has **a painful appliance problem that you can't take care of yourself**, these are considered to be a **true orthodontic emergency**. In either of these cases you should immediately contact our office.

- You can reach us during normal office hours at (480) 494-2001.
- If it is after hours, on the weekend, or a holiday, please **TEXT** our emergency number at (480) 408-0927.
- If you do not receive a response within 30 minutes, please **TEXT** our other emergency number at (480) 408-0924.

Common ortho issues: Non-Emergency

You might be surprised to learn that you may be able to solve many problems yourself temporarily until you can get to our office. Below is a list of NON-EMERGENCY situations that are common for orthodontic patients, and some at-home solutions for these.

General soreness

When you get your braces on, and sometimes following adjustments, it is normal to experience general soreness in your mouth and your teeth may be tender to biting pressures for up to one week.

- Stick to a soft diet until your teeth do not hurt to chew.
- Irritated gums and other sore spots can be relieved by rinsing your mouth with a warm salt-water solution. Dissolve one teaspoonful of salt in eight ounces of warm water, and rinse your mouth vigorously. This can be done as often as you like throughout the day.
- If the tenderness is severe, take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or whatever you normally take for headache or similar pain, as directed by a parent. Aspirin, Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) and Naproxen Sodium (Aleve) actually slow tooth movement, so it is not advisable to use them frequently while wearing braces.

Lost separator

It is quite common for some patients to lose at least one separator during treatment. The separators need to be in place for about a week to do their job. After a few days, they may create enough room between your back teeth so that they fall out on their own. This is perfectly ok and is not an emergency; it simply means there is enough room now. If your appointment is within one to two days then we do not need to replace this sep. However, if your appointment is three or more days away, contact us so we can make a quick appointment to replace it.

Loose bracket or band

If your bracket is still attached to the wire you should leave it in place and use wax to stick in to the tooth. If the bracket comes off entirely, try to save it and bring with you to your next orthodontic appointment. Immediately contact us for an appointment to have it examined and repaired. Call our office to schedule an appointment to have the bracket repaired. Brackets on the back teeth can be re-attached by an orthodontic assistant. Brackets on the front teeth will need to be re-attached by the orthodontist. Dr. Lee is available on Mondays, while Dr. Williams is available on Fridays.

Poking wire

If a wire is causing irritation, try pushing it away from the irritated area by using the eraser end of a pencil or a cotton swab. If the wire cannot be tucked away, cover the end with a small piece of orthodontic wax or a wet cotton ball. If your lips or cheeks are irritated, place wax on the area to reduce the annoyance.

Expander

The most common problem we see with the RPE is an incomplete activation where the key cannot be seated for the next activation. You should see the next hole completely in the RPE when the key is removed. Call us if you have this problem and we will get you in to correct it.

If one of the arms gets bent or is pinching the gum tissue, please call so we can adjust your RPE.

Your RPE bands should be cemented and not moving on the teeth. If your bands

become loose, please call to have the appliance re-cemented. You should carefully follow the food list and avoid sticky, hard foods.