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SEPARATORS (SPACERS)

Separators make a small amount of space between some of your back teeth to allow the special braces that go around your molars (bands) to easily go into place at our next appointment.



Spacers can be either small elastic rubber bands or small metal springs. After they are placed, it will feel like there is something stuck in between your teeth (because there is!). Please **DO NOT** pick them out. They will slowly, over a few days, gently move your teeth slightly apart to allow us to comfortably place the bands/ palatal expander around your molars at your next appointment.

Your teeth may feel sore for a couple of days, but rinsing with warm salt water can help relieve this soreness. Orajel, BraceRelief, or another similar topical anesthetic can also relieve soreness and can be applied directly to the affected area with a Q-tip. If soreness persists, we recommend ibuprofen (generic, Advil or Motrin), or Tylenol. Usually by the third day, you forget they are even there!

You can brush and floss normally while your separators are in place, but **DO NOT** floss where the separators are, and **DO NOT** eat anything sticky (including gum, caramel, Sour Patch Kids, AirHeads, Gummy Bears, toffee, etc.).

If one or more of your separators comes out, please do not panic – if you have not been eating sticky things, the separator probably came out because it has finished making the necessary space. If you have lost a separator, please call the office to have it replaced. We will usually have you come in a couple of days before your next appointment to replace any lost spacers.

NOTE: Separators should ideally not be in place for more than 4 weeks. If you are unable to keep your next scheduled appointment, please call the office to see if we recommend that your spacers be removed.