

PATIENT GUIDE

## New braces: the parent guide

How to back them up at home in the first week, what is normal, and when to get in touch. · 30 Aug 2026

Teeth start moving from fitting day and grumble about it for a few days. That is the braces working. Soft food, patience and good brushing get everyone through the first week, which is where home makes the difference. You do not need to do anything clinical; you need to stock the fridge, keep wax within reach, and keep the brushing honest.

### What the first week looks like

- Tender teeth for roughly three to five days; it fades steadily.
- Soft-food dinners help: pasta, soups, smoothies, eggs, mashed anything.
- A milder version of the ache after each adjustment visit.
- Speech and eating back to normal by the end of the week.

### How to help at home

- Keep wax within reach, plus a spare pack in the school bag.
- Brushing after every meal, with interdental brushes at night. For the first fortnight, a look in the mirror together after the night brush sets the standard.
- Stock the soft foods before fitting day, not after.
- Cut fruit and firm food up for the lunchbox. The one food rule is hard, sticky or chewy breaks brackets.
- A mouthguard for any contact sport. We can point you to one made for braces.

### Completely normal

- Teeth feeling slightly loose; that is them moving.
- Cheeks and lips toughening up over the first week, with the odd rubbed spot. Wax and warm salt-water rinses.
- Speech settling back to normal within a few days.
- A few white marks on the inside of the lips where they rubbed. They heal.

### **Message us if**

- A bracket comes loose or a wire pokes. Wax first, then message.
- An ulcer will not settle after warm salt-water rinses.
- Discomfort is severe or not easing after the first week.
- Anything worries you at all. Quick questions are welcome.

Call us on (09)520 1880 or email [hello@milkkorthodontics.co.nz](mailto:hello@milkkorthodontics.co.nz).

### **Common questions**

#### **Should they stay home from school?**

No need. The first day or two are tender, not incapacitating. A soft lunch and the wax in the bag are enough.

#### **How much should I be checking their brushing?**

For the first two weeks, every night. After that, a look once or twice a week and a glance at the gums: pink and flat is good, red and puffy means the brushing has slipped.

**Steady habits at home are what finish the smile. Thanks for being on the team.**