



## *Eating Habits and Space Maintainers*

Foods that are appealing, but **dangerous**:

**Bubble Gum**  
**Caramel**  
**Sticky Sweets**  
**Carbonated beverages**

These four types of food may cause trouble, as may other foods. Use common sense or, if you are in doubt, **ask the doctor** about some food you enjoy eating.

### **Avoid consuming:**

**Sticky foods** - these foods tend to pull the metal rings (bands) that support the space maintainer off of the teeth thereby loosening the appliance.

**Foods high in sugar content** - **avoid** whenever possible. If you do eat any of them, brush your teeth immediately. If not convenient to brush, then always rinse your mouth vigorously with clear water after eating sweet foods.

**Carbonated beverages** - these drinks tend to break down the cement that holds the metal rings (bands) to the tooth they are attached on, thereby loosening the appliance.

**Note:** Breads, crackers, and pastas have recently been discovered to have high cavity producing potential due to their sugar (starch) content coupled with their relatively slow clearance from the mouth. Snacking in moderation (2-3 times/day) or eating snacks in conjunction with meals is an excellent preventive measure. Regular use of the new fluoride rinses (examples are Fluoriguard and Act) are highly recommended during treatment as they help protect the teeth from decay. Mechanical aids such as the Interplak Toothbrush, Interjet, or Waterpik can be very helpful. These items may be carried in stock at our dental office. Please consult Dr. Adams or his assistants if you have any questions.

**Remember**, decay progresses very rapidly in baby teeth because of the relatively thin layer of enamel that acts as a protective shell around the tooth. Regular flossing of the child's teeth, usually aided by the parent, should be routine so that food will not sit between the teeth or get trapped under the edge of the metal ring that supports the wire. Flossing should be done by bringing the floss down through the contact point between adjacent teeth into the gums, moving it up and down along the tooth surfaces, and then pulling the floss sideways out from between the teeth. A small knot placed in the floss can assist you in removing food and plaque as you pull the floss through the teeth sideways in one motion. Pulling the floss back up and through the teeth may dislodge the metal ring. Please call if you have any questions.

