

Beware of Do-It-Yourself Orthodontics

Consumer Alert

Thousands of online videos offer purported “advice” and “instructions” on do-it-yourself (DIY) orthodontic care. The proliferation of misinformation led the American Association of Orthodontists to issue this consumer alert:

Beware of Internet videos and websites which encourage people to try and straighten their own teeth. Moving teeth is a medical procedure and needs personal supervision by an orthodontist. Please be wary of any suggestions to move teeth with rubber bands, dental floss, or other objects ordered on the Internet. Moving teeth without a thorough examination of the overall health of the teeth and gums could result in the permanent loss of teeth, which may result in expensive and lifelong dental problems. Orthodontists receive two to three years of specialized education beyond dental school and are specialists in straightening teeth and aligning the bite.

Be aware of signs that a student may be attempting do-it-yourself orthodontics, such as:

- Foreign objects around teeth, including paper clips, rubber bands, dental floss or the backs of earrings glued to teeth
- Extruded upper front teeth
- Loose permanent teeth, especially upper front teeth
- Swollen or bleeding gums
- Unexplained oral or facial discomfort



DIY Paperclip Braces



DIY Rubber Band Around Teeth

If you encounter these signs in a student and confirm that the student is engaging in DIY orthodontic care, please alert the parent/guardian of the risks of permanent and lifelong dental problems that can arise from DIY orthodontic care, and suggest a consultation with an orthodontist.



Find More Information

For more information visit our consumer website

www.aaoinfo.org/#consumerAlert

The American Association of Orthodontists believes that it is in the best, and safest, interest of the public to have orthodontic treatment conducted under the direct and ongoing supervision of a licensed orthodontist. Find AAO orthodontists at aaoinfo.org.



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