

# **What are the optimum plaque control methods for patients with fixed orthodontic appliances?**

## **Abstract**

Fixed orthodontic treatment is on the rise due to increased dental awareness. Poorly aligned teeth can cause an increase in plaque accumulation due to inaccessibility. However, fixed orthodontic treatment, because of the presence of brackets and archwires, also makes oral hygiene practices more challenging. This can lead to problems such as gingival inflammation and decalcification of the enamel. Therefore, it is crucial that oral hygiene measures are maintained throughout treatment to prevent these problems.

This dissertation aimed to discuss what are the optimum plaque control methods for patients with fixed orthodontic treatment. It was found that there is a variability of oral hygiene aids available, including various types of toothbrushes, interdental cleaning aids and toothpastes. Research of the literature concluded that no one oral hygiene is more superior than another. However, it reiterates the significance of the role of the dental hygienist, as part of the dental team, to educate and advise patients who are wearing fixed orthodontic appliances on the importance of maintaining excellent oral hygiene. It is the role of the dental hygienist to reinforce the message to help these patients to achieve the best clinical outcomes and maintain excellent oral hygiene going forward.

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