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What you need to know about rubber bands (elastics)

Elastics or rubber bands are used to help move your teeth and fix your bite. If the rubber bands are not worn as directed, the teeth will not move, treatment will be prolonged, and the final result may be compromised. These little things play a very important role in getting you out of braces. Below are instructions that you should be familiar with.

- Elastics should be worn twenty-four hours a day unless you have been told otherwise. Change them every 12 hours for maximum effectiveness as they lose their strength.
- Remove them only when you brush and floss your teeth. Put them around a finger so that you will remember to put them back in immediately afterwards.
- There has never been an orthodontic case where rubber bands did not work. They do, however, require time and patience. Even if you think your teeth are not moving, they are... KEEP WEARING your rubber bands.
- Carry extra elastics with you all the time. If one should break, and they will, replace it immediately.
- Should you lose them or run out, please stop by the office to pick up or call so that we can mail you more. We do not want you to lose any wear time as this may delay treatment.
- **DO NOT** use your friend's rubber bands if you run out! Everybody's case is different and requires different strength rubber bands. You could damage your teeth if you use the wrong rubber bands.
- Sometimes the teeth will get sore when the elastics are started. Usually, this soreness lasts only a few days. Wearing elastics sporadically will also cause teeth soreness and makes it difficult to move teeth.
- Your elastics may be difficult to put on in the beginning. After a few days of practice, placing the elastics will become very easy.
- If, for some reason, you cannot wear your elastics as you have been instructed, please call our office for an appointment so that we can either reinstruct you or fix the problem that is preventing you from getting them on. This is not considered an emergency but we do want to fix the problem ASAP.

POOR ELASTIC WEAR WILL INCREASE YOUR TREATMENT TIME

REMEMBER: Dr. Ortega and her team know when rubber bands have not been worn consistently. We also want you to get your braces off as soon as possible and sometimes we may need to remind you how important they are.