Eating and Drinking with Invisalign | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/can-you-eat-and-drink-normally-with-invisalign/

Details:

You cannot eat with your aligners in, but Invisalign gives you a lot of dietary freedom because the aligners are removable. At Core Dental we ask you to take your aligners out before you eat or drink anything other than plain water, then brush or rinse before you put them back in. Once they are out, you can generally eat the foods you enjoy without worrying about damaging the appliance, unlike fixed braces. Your dentist or orthodontist will give advice that suits your own treatment.

Can you eat normally while wearing Invisalign aligners?

Not with the aligners in. Invisalign aligners are removable, which is the main reason many people find eating easier than with traditional braces. You take the aligners out, eat your meal or snack, clean your teeth and then put the aligners back in.

Because nothing is fixed to your teeth, there is usually no need to avoid foods that fixed braces can damage, such as crunchy, sticky or hard foods. Hard foods can still chip or crack natural teeth, so ordinary care applies. Your aligners are worn for many hours each day, so building the habit of removing them at every meal and snack is an important part of treatment.

What should you do after eating before putting your aligners back in?

After a meal, brush your teeth, or at least rinse your mouth well with water, before you reinsert your aligners. This helps stop food particles from being trapped between the aligner and your teeth, where they could increase the risk of tooth decay.

If you are out and cannot brush, a thorough rinse with water is a sensible short-term step. It helps to carry a travel toothbrush and your aligner case so you can clean up properly when you can. Always store your aligners in their case when they are out, rather than wrapping them in a tissue or napkin, where they are easy to lose or throw away by mistake.

Is it safe to drink water while wearing Invisalign aligners?

Yes. Plain water is the one drink you can usually have with your aligners in. Sipping water through the day keeps you hydrated and does not harm or discolour the aligners.

Staying well hydrated also supports saliva flow, which helps protect your teeth. Sparkling or flavoured water can be acidic or contain sugar, so ask your dentist whether it suits you while you are wearing aligners.

What drinks should you avoid while wearing Invisalign aligners?

Remove your aligners before drinking anything other than water. This particularly applies to sugary or acidic drinks such as coffee, tea, soft drinks, sports drinks and fruit juices.

If you enjoy a morning coffee or tea, the simplest approach is to take the aligners out, enjoy your drink, and then clean your teeth and put the aligners back in. If you sip a drink slowly over a long time, your teeth are exposed to sugar or acid for longer, so it helps to finish it in one sitting where you can.

Why can coffee, tea and soft drinks cause problems with aligners?

There are two concerns. First, coffee, tea, soft drinks and juices can stain and discolour the clear plastic of your aligners. Second, sugary or acidic liquids can be held against your teeth by the aligner, which keeps the sugar and acid in contact with the enamel and can raise the risk of decay.

Good habits reduce both concerns: remove the aligners for drinks, rinse or brush afterwards, and clean your aligners as your dentist recommends. Your Core Dental team can show you how to look after your aligners at your appointment.

How does eating with Invisalign compare with traditional braces?

Fixed braces have brackets and wires bonded to the teeth, so people are often asked to avoid foods that could bend wires or loosen brackets. With removable aligners, you take them out to eat, so those food restrictions generally do not apply. You do take on a different responsibility: wearing the aligners for the hours your dentist recommends and cleaning your teeth before putting them back in.

If you are weighing up your options, read our overview of the benefits of Invisalign and the Invisalign treatment page. Whether Invisalign is suitable depends on an individual examination and assessment.

How do you keep your teeth and aligners healthy during treatment?

Follow the guidelines your dentist or orthodontist gives you. In general, that means removing your aligners before eating or drinking anything other than water, cleaning your teeth after meals, and maintaining good daily oral hygiene. Regular check-ups let your team monitor your teeth and your progress, and make sure treatment stays on track.

How can we help?

If you are thinking about Invisalign, or you are already in treatment and have questions about eating and drinking, our team can help at any of our nine Core Dental clinics: Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside and Glenferrie . Call 13 13 16 or book online at coredental.com.au. We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans.

Further detail from Core Dental

The following points are drawn from Core Dental's own published material on this topic. They are included here for completeness, and anything that applies to your own treatment should be confirmed with your clinician.

One of the most common questions among prospective Invisalign patients is whether they can maintain their normal eating and drinking habits while undergoing treatment. Let's delve into this question to understand the dos and don'ts of eating and drinking with Invisalign aligners. Failure to do so can damage the aligners and compromise the treatment's effectiveness and prolong treatment. Invisalign offers a convenient and discreet solution for straightening your teeth, allowing you to eat and drink with more freedom compared to traditional braces.

The published food rules during orthodontic treatment

There is an official list of what to avoid while wearing an orthodontic appliance, and it splits neatly into two kinds of rule: one protects the appliance, the other protects your teeth. Knowing which is which tells you what actually relaxes when the aligners come out.

Rule one, protecting the appliance. The Victorian Department of Health: "Avoid sticky or hard foods during orthodontic treatment. These include chewing gum, lollies and crusty bread. These foods can get stuck on braces, aligners and retainers and cause damage."

Note that aligners and retainers are named alongside braces. The damage risk is to the plastic as well as to brackets, so this rule follows the appliance rather than the treatment type.

Rule two, protecting your teeth. "Avoid high sugar foods and drinks, including fruit juice. These can lead to tooth decay."

This one is about enamel, so it does not relax when the aligners are out — which is the opposite of what the convenience of removability suggests. The Department's general decay advice explains why: "The more frequently you eat or drink sugary things, the more often the bacteria produce acid." A removable appliance makes frequent snacking easier, and frequency is precisely the variable that drives decay.

Which is why the Department pairs the two rules with a limit on snacking. In its orthodontic risk advice: "Limit snacking and sugar-sweetened food and drinks during orthodontic treatment."

And on drinks specifically , its general list of what to limit is broader than sugar: "soft drinks (including sugar-free/diet and regular), sports drinks, cordials and fruit juices". Sugar-free versions are on that list because of their acid. For anything acidic the Department's separate erosion advice is not to brush straight afterwards: "Wait at least 30 minutes after the acid exposure before brushing your teeth, to allow your saliva to neutralise the acid in your mouth."

Its preferred drink is short: "Drink plenty of water (fluoridated tap water wherever possible). Plain milk is also a tooth-friendly option."

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Orthodontic treatment, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 15 December 2025); Tooth decay, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 28 June 2025); Teeth and mouth care, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 25 July 2025); Dental erosion, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 22 October 2025). All accessed 6 November 2026.

The cleaning standard goes up, not down

The convenience of taking an appliance out to eat comes with an obligation that the published advice states as a higher standard than ordinary brushing — and it names aligners specifically.

The risk, in the Department's words: "Dental hygiene problems - Braces, aligners and retainers make cleaning the teeth more difficult. This increases the chance of gum disease, tooth decay, and stains."

The standard it sets in response: "It is important that teeth are cleaned thoroughly at least two times a day, ideally after every meal. There are special toothbrushes that can make cleaning around braces easier. Use a fluoride toothpaste to help protect teeth from tooth decay."

At least twice a day, ideally after every meal. That is the sentence to plan around if you eat three or four times a day and put plastic back over your teeth each time.

A tool it recommends by name. "Interdental brushes are another type of brush. They fit into small spaces around brackets, wires and between teeth. They can be particularly helpful during orthodontic treatment."

And the reason cleaning between teeth is not optional. Outside orthodontics the Department already puts a figure on what brushing alone misses: "If you forget to floss or use an interdental brush (for bigger gaps between teeth), up to a third of each tooth doesn't get cleaned!" During treatment, by its

own account, cleaning is harder — so that third does not shrink.

What the appliance does to whatever is left behind. The Department does not describe this mechanism, so we will not invent one. What it does say is that plaque is bacteria that "stick to your teeth in a soft build up", that they turn sugar into acid as a waste product, and that saliva "washes sugar out of your mouth and into your stomach, stops acid from causing damage, fights bacteria". Saliva is the defence, and anything that sits between saliva and the tooth surface is worth removing food from first. That is the practical case for brushing before the aligners go back in, rather than a claim about how aligners behave.

On what you can take them out for , the Department's list is specific and includes cleaning them: "You usually need to wear clear aligners for 20-22 hours a day, but you can take them out to eat, drink and clean them."

And one thing not to do with the hours. The wear figure is the mechanism, not a target to negotiate — the aligners work because they "put pressure on certain teeth, which causes the teeth to move", and the fixed-brace alternative achieves "a constant gentle pressure" by being impossible to remove. Time out of the mouth is time the sequence is not progressing.

Your practitioner is expected to walk you through this. "Your orthodontist or dentist will explain how to care for your teeth", and on brushes, "there are special orthodontic toothbrushes that your dental practitioner can show you."

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Orthodontic treatment, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 15 December 2025); Tooth decay, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 28 June 2025); Teeth and mouth care, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 25 July 2025). All accessed 6 November 2026.

Frequently asked questions

Can I keep my aligners in while I eat a snack?

No. Take your aligners out for every meal and snack. Eating with them in can damage the aligners, trap food against your teeth and make cleaning harder. Put them in their case, eat, then brush or rinse before wearing them again.

Can I drink coffee or tea with my aligners in?

We recommend you remove your aligners first. Coffee and tea can stain the clear plastic, and being held against your teeth by the aligners can increase the risk of decay. Enjoy your drink, then clean your teeth and put the aligners back in.

What if I cannot brush my teeth after eating?

Rinse your mouth thoroughly with water before putting your aligners back in, and brush as soon as you can. A small travel toothbrush and your aligner case make this much easier when you are at work or out for a meal.

Do I need to avoid any foods during Invisalign treatment?

Because the aligners come out for meals, you usually do not face the food restrictions that apply to fixed braces. Hard foods can still harm natural teeth, and sugary snacks add to decay risk, so ask your dentist for advice that suits you.

How long should I wear my aligners each day?

Your dentist or orthodontist will tell you how many hours a day suit your treatment plan. Taking aligners out at meals counts against that time, so we encourage you to eat at set times and put them straight back in afterwards.

Which foods does the published advice say to avoid?

Two separate lists. For the appliance: "Avoid sticky or hard foods during orthodontic treatment. These include chewing gum, lollies and crusty bread. These foods can get stuck on braces, aligners and retainers and cause damage." For your teeth: "Avoid high sugar foods and drinks, including fruit juice. These can lead to tooth decay."

Do the food rules relax because my aligners come out to eat?

Only the ones protecting the appliance. The sugar rule is about enamel and does not relax. The Department also asks you to "limit snacking and sugar-sweetened food and drinks during orthodontic treatment" — and its general decay advice notes that "the more frequently you eat or drink sugary things, the more often the bacteria produce acid".

What can I drink while wearing them?

The Department's wear guidance is that you can take aligners out "to eat, drink and clean them". On what to drink generally: "Drink plenty of water (fluoridated tap water wherever possible). Plain milk is also a tooth-friendly option", and limit "soft drinks (including sugar-free/diet and regular), sports drinks, cordials and fruit juices".

Are sugar-free drinks safe?

They are on the same limit list, because of acid rather than sugar.

Should I brush straight after an acidic drink?

No. "Wait at least 30 minutes after the acid exposure before brushing your teeth, to allow your saliva to neutralise the acid in your mouth."

How often should I be cleaning my teeth during treatment?

More often than usual. "It is important that teeth are cleaned thoroughly at least two times a day, ideally after every meal." Use "a fluoride toothpaste to help protect teeth from tooth decay".

Is cleaning really harder with removable aligners?

The Department includes them in the risk: "Braces, aligners and retainers make cleaning the teeth more difficult. This increases the chance of gum disease, tooth decay, and stains."

Is there a brush that helps?

Interdental brushes. They "fit into small spaces around brackets, wires and between teeth" and "can be particularly helpful during orthodontic treatment". The Department also notes "there are special

orthodontic toothbrushes that your dental practitioner can show you".

What if I cannot clean between my teeth properly?

It matters more than people expect. Outside orthodontics the Department already warns that without floss or an interdental brush, "up to a third of each tooth doesn't get cleaned" — and during treatment cleaning is harder, not easier.

How many hours should the aligners actually be in?

"You usually need to wear clear aligners for 20-22 hours a day." The hours are the mechanism: the aligners "put pressure on certain teeth, which causes the teeth to move", so time out of the mouth is time the sequence is not progressing.

Who should explain all this to me?

Your practitioner, and the Department says so: "Your orthodontist or dentist will explain how to care for your teeth."

Related services and further reading

Invisalign treatment

Types of Invisalign

Invisalign frequently asked questions

Invisalign fees

The Invisalign process

Benefits of Invisalign

Orthodontics at Core Dental

Straightening teeth without braces

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

Invisalign Blue Diamond provider, as stated on coredental.com.au.

Interest-free payment plans and HICAPS on-site claiming.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online via coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday mornings, Sunday closed

Clinics	Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside , Glenferrie

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

Can you wear Invisalign aligners while eating?

You cannot eat with Invisalign aligners in. At Core Dental we ask patients to remove them before every meal and snack, store them in their case, and clean their teeth before putting them back in.

What can I drink with Invisalign aligners in?

Plain water is the one drink you can usually have with aligners in. Our Core Dental team recommends removing them for coffee, tea, soft drinks, sports drinks and juices, which can stain the aligners and raise decay risk.

Why does Core Dental ask me to brush before reinserting aligners?

Food and sugar left on your teeth can be held against the enamel by the aligners, which may increase decay risk. We suggest brushing, or at least rinsing well with water, before you reinsert them.

Are there foods I must avoid with Invisalign?

Because aligners are removed for eating, the food limits of fixed braces generally do not apply. Our dentists still advise caution with hard foods and sugary snacks, and they can give advice specific to your treatment.

Does Core Dental offer Invisalign?

Yes. Core Dental offers Invisalign across our clinics and is described on coredental.com.au as an Invisalign Blue Diamond provider. Suitability depends on an individual examination, so book an assessment with our team.

How do I book an Invisalign consultation at Core Dental?

Call 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au. We are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings, and we quote before treatment starts.

Does Core Dental offer payment plans for Invisalign?

We offer interest-free payment plans. Payright terms published as at September 2026 include 0% interest, fortnightly instalments, 3 to 30 months and plans up to $20,000, subject to eligibility. Confirm current terms when you book.