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### Suggestions for Braces and Retainers on Passover

I preface any discussion with the disclaimer that I am not a rabbi. All *halachic* questions should be asked to a competent rabbi.

- 1) Obviously, the most important issue is that people with braces make sure that the teeth be absolutely clean. One should clean teeth during the time when *chametz* is still permissible. Use whatever it takes to do a good job: manual or electric toothbrush, Waterpik®, Proxabrush®, or floss. Beyond this, discuss it with a rabbi. For instance, some rabbis (such as mine) will recommend refraining from eating hot *chametz* 24 hours before the time for which eating *chametz* becomes forbidden.
- 2) Those patients wearing orthodontic elastics should be aware that the elastics are manufactured with corn starch which is a derivative of legumes (*kitnios*). Therefore, on *Pesach*, elastics should be rinsed in water before wearing.
- 3) Regarding removable plastic appliances (retainers and bite plates), there are various opinions about how to prepare them for *Pesach*. Many rabbis will advise cleaning them well in warm water and leaving them out for 24 hours. Please **do not boil them**. A rule of thumb is that if the water is too hot for your finger, it is too hot for the plastic. Boiling water will warp the plastic.

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