

HOW MUST THE PATIENT HELP?

Patient co-operation is important to achieve successful results. This means following instructions regarding oral hygiene, diet, & recommended wear of elastics, plates & head gear. Breakages should also be avoided as they can cause discomfort & will also delay treatment.

WHAT CAN GO WRONG?

Patients usually go through treatment without any problems. However, at times complications may occur.

If oral hygiene is inadequate, decay around the braces may occur. If gums are inflamed & teeth are being moved there can be permanent damage to the supporting structures of the teeth. Moving teeth may result in a minor rounding of the tooth root tip.



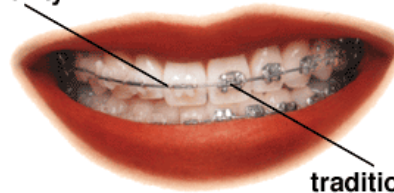
IS TREATMENT UNCOMFORTABLE?

Some discomfort is usually experienced a few hours after appliances have been fitted & may last several days following subsequent visits. Everyone's pain threshold is different, but a Panadol or Nurofen will usually relieve any soreness.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Fees vary from patient to patient & an estimate will be prepared for you prior to beginning any procedures. Health funds & rebates are the responsibility of the patient & enquires in this regard should be directed to those organisations.

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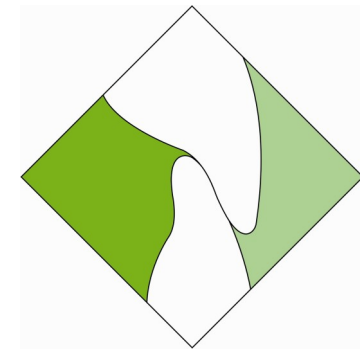


traditional
brackets

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The smile says it all.

DO YOU WANT STRAIGHT TEETH?



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WHAT IS ORTHODONTICS?

Orthodontics is that branch of dentistry which specialises in the diagnosis, prevention & treatment of problems in the alignment of teeth & jaws.

The technical term for these problems is malocclusion, which means bad bite.

Orthodontic treatment involves use of corrective appliances, such as braces, plates, headgears & functional appliances to bring the teeth & jaws into proper alignment.

WHY STRAIGHTEN CROOKED TEETH?

Appearance – People are very aware of how teeth look & an attractive smile can play an important role in enhancing self-confidence.

Hygiene – It's more difficult to clean your teeth when they are crowded & overlapping. Inadequate cleaning is a major factor in tooth decay, gum disease & eventual tooth loss.

Tooth wear – It is claimed that some bad bites lead to clenching, grinding, & excessive wear and/or uneven wear of the teeth.

Gum damage – In severe malocclusions the teeth can damage the gum. For example, in cases of deep bite, the lower front teeth can bite into the gum behind the upper front teeth.

Jaw joint problems – It is claimed that some bad bites stress the jaw joint causing damage and pain in and around the joint.

Speech – Some people have difficulty speaking properly because of alignment problems with their teeth & jaws.



WHEN TO START ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT



Orthodontic problems are usually clear by the age of seven, when most of the adult front teeth have come through. However, your general dentist may find an orthodontic problem earlier.

Early examination allows the orthodontist to evaluate problems & plan appropriate treatment.

Early treatment may prevent more serious problems from developing and/or make treatment at a later age shorter & less complicated. Early treatment may also achieve results that are not possible once the face & jaws have stopped growing. In most cases, orthodontic treatment is commenced as soon as the last baby tooth has been lost. This usually occurs in the early teens. In some cases, it is an advantage to start just before the last baby teeth are shed. In the past, orthodontic treatment was generally restricted to children. However, the basic process involved in moving teeth is the same at any age & orthodontic treatment is also successful for adults.

Because an adult's facial bones are no longer growing, some severe malocclusions cannot be corrected with braces alone. In such cases, orthodontic treatment combined with jaw surgery can achieve dramatic improvements.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO CORRECT THE PROBLEM

There are many treatment methods. The most common is the use of fixed appliances, also known as "braces". They are made up of such things as brackets, bands, archwires, tie wires, springs, hooks & tubes. At the same time as braces are used, auxiliary appliances such as elastics & head gear are often used.

Another form of appliance is the plate (removable appliance) which can be taken in & out of the mouth by the patient.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

The length of active treatment can vary on how severe your case is. Typically treatment lasts 21 to 24 months. Appointments are scheduled between four & eight weeks.

Once braces have been removed, your teeth are held in place with a set of removable plates. The length of this retention phase will vary according to the individual's original problem.