

ORTHODONTICS AT ANY AGE

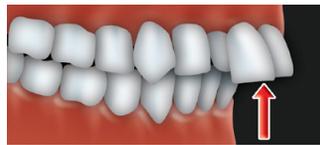
People of any age can benefit from orthodontic treatment.

Orthodontic treatment straightens your teeth. Straight teeth are easier to clean and less likely to get tooth decay and gum disease.

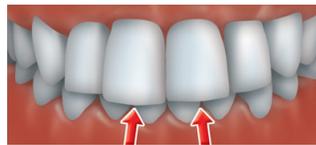
WHY YOU MAY NEED ORTHODONTICS

When your top and bottom teeth do not fit together properly, this is called a malocclusion or a bad bite. Problems like missing, crooked, crowded or protruding teeth can contribute to a bad bite. Thumb or finger-sucking may also affect your bite.

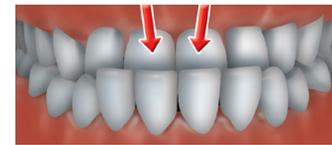
A bad bite can make it hard to chew some foods and may cause some teeth to wear down. It can also cause muscle tension and pain. Teeth that stick out are more easily chipped or broken. Teeth can be moved at any age. Your dentist or orthodontist can evaluate if orthodontic treatment is right for you.



An overjet occurs when the upper front teeth protrude.



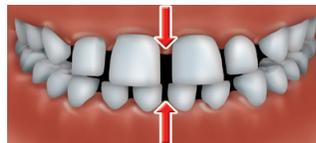
A deep bite occurs when the upper front teeth cover the lower front teeth too much.



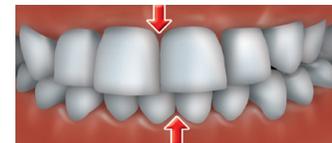
An underbite occurs when the upper teeth fit inside the arch of the lower teeth.



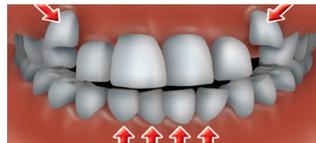
An open bite occurs when the back teeth are together and there is an opening between the lower and upper front teeth.



Gaps between teeth.



A crossbite occurs when one or more of your upper teeth don't line up with the appropriate lower tooth or teeth.



Crowded or Overlapped teeth

ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT TAKES TIME

The amount of time required for orthodontic treatment depends on your age, seriousness of the problem and the treatment technique used. Braces or other appliances apply a gentle pressure on your teeth. Over a number of months or years this pressure can move your teeth into the right position. Most people wear braces for about 2 years.

CARING FOR YOUR TEETH WITH BRACES

Proper brushing and flossing is even more important for people with braces because plaque can easily build up around the edges of your braces. If this plaque is not properly removed, white or brown marks may appear on the enamel surface of your teeth that can become permanent.

Brushing and flossing with braces will take longer. Your dentist or orthodontist will give you tips on how to brush and on how to floss using floss threaders. Parents should supervise their children to make sure they do a good job cleaning their teeth and braces and follow the advice of their dentist or orthodontist.

CARING FOR YOUR BRACES

Avoid biting on hard foods like nuts or sticky treats like chewing gum or toffee because they can loosen braces, distort wires and even pull braces off your teeth.

When a problem happens, contact your dentist or orthodontist to have your braces checked as soon as possible. Problems that are not fixed can cause the treatment to last longer.

TYPES OF ORTHODONTIC TREATMENTS

Depending on the extent of your bad bite, your dentist or orthodontist may suggest one or a combination of the following orthodontic treatments to correct your bite:

- **BRACES** - Braces is most common type of orthodontic treatment. Today's braces are smaller and less noticeable. Besides the traditional metal braces, braces can be multi-coloured or even tooth-coloured. To apply braces, your dentist or orthodontist attaches brackets (or bands) to each tooth with glue. Arch wires are fitted into all the brackets and are usually held in place with rubber or wire ties. You may feel some discomfort for a while when your braces are first put on and after each adjustment. It will take a little time to get used to your braces and they can bother your lips and cheeks. Clear aligners are also available for adults.
- **HEADGEAR** - This treatment uses an appliance that fits around the head or neck. It guides the direction of tooth movement and jaw growth in someone who is still growing. There are different types of headgear and they may be worn during any part of the orthodontic treatment. In most cases it is worn during the evening and at night.
- **REMOVABLE APPLIANCES** - Although removable appliances are not as precise as braces, they can move a tooth or a group of teeth. Removable appliances can be worn before braces are applied, while braces are worn, or on their own to treat specific problems.
- **RETAINERS** - Once your braces have been removed, a retainer can be used to keep your teeth in the right place. Retainers are fixed (attached to the teeth) or removable. They may need to be worn all the time or part of the time.
- **ORAL SURGERY** - Tooth removal may be needed if your teeth are crowded or if a tooth is badly out of position. Jaw surgery (or orthognathic surgery) may be needed when there are major differences in the size or position of the upper and lower jaws. If your orthodontist thinks you will need jaw surgery, he or she will refer you to an oral and maxillofacial surgeon.

