



Consumer Guide To Orthodontic Treatment

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Choosing an orthodontist for you or your child is one of life's important decisions. Your smile and dental health will be improved forever if you take the time to research and learn more about orthodontics and its lifetime benefits.

Our purpose in creating this guide is to address the common questions and concerns when looking into starting orthodontic treatment. We understand that there may be initial apprehension when your General or Family Dentist suggests that you or your child should see an orthodontist. Many questions may come to mind but here are some of the most common.



1. Is there an orthodontic problem, and if so, what is it?

This question can't be answered unless a qualified specialist performs a comprehensive evaluation. Fortunately, most orthodontic offices offer a complimentary consultation that will provide the answers to most of your orthodontic questions. Following your consultation, some of the things you should learn include:

- Recommended treatment (if any)
- Timing of treatment (when to start)
- If any teeth need to be removed
- How long treatment will take
- How much treatment will cost

Clearly these are some of the basic question that should be answered during your initial orthodontic visit. Questions related to types of braces, appliances and Invisalign might be discussed depending on the needs of the patient.



2. My child still has primary (baby) teeth, why do I need to see an Orthodontist?

Orthodontic treatment is not only for patients with a full compliment of adult teeth. In fact, the American Association of Orthodontists recommends all children be seen by an orthodontist at age 7 for an orthodontic evaluation. If your child has crowded teeth, protruding teeth (overbite), a narrow upper jaw, a crossbite, an underbite, severe mouth breathing or a finger or thumb habit, all these problems should and can be solved early while he or she is still growing. Make sure you see an orthodontist with experience in early interceptive treatment.

3. Where should I go? Who should I see?

Just as you would seek out an Obstetrician for prenatal care or a Pediatrician for child health care, you should see an Orthodontic Specialist for your orthodontic treatment. Because Orthodontic Specialists devote their entire practice to straightening teeth they have the most experience and are the most qualified to deliver exceptional orthodontic treatment results.

When choosing between orthodontists there are many choices but keep in mind that orthodontic treatment involves an ongoing relationship between you and the Orthodontist. You should choose someone you like and trust as well as someone who has experience and clinical expertise.

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4. How much is treatment going to cost? Does my insurance cover orthodontic treatment?

The cost of orthodontic treatment depends on the type of treatment needed and the complexity of the case. No two orthodontists will treat a case exactly the same way so their fees may differ. Most orthodontists will offer a comprehensive treatment fee that covers all your appointments, appliances, retainers and even retainer checks after treatment is completed. Make sure before you start treatment that there are no hidden fees at the end of treatment.

Most orthodontic offices will offer several financing options including interest-free in-house financing as well as third party financing. Most offices will work within your monthly budget to get payments that are affordable for you.

Orthodontic insurance is often separate from your dental insurance. In most instances, a patient must have an orthodontic rider to their dental policy for coverage to be available. If a patient does have coverage, the benefit amount is specified by the plan. In most cases, the amount paid by insurance will cover a portion of the total treatment fee. You should choose an office that will handle all insurance submissions and accept payment directly from your insurance company.



5. Is Invisalign an option?

In simple terms, Invisalign is just another orthodontic appliance used to move teeth. Invisalign works best when a patient has all or most of their adult teeth, so Invisalign patients are typically adults and teens.

The decision to treat a patient with Invisalign aligners versus traditional braces depends on the case and the type of tooth movement required. Some orthodontic movements are performed more efficiently with braces while others are handled best with Invisalign. Your orthodontist should be able recommend the appropriate treatment method for you case. With the evolution of the Invisalign system, it is a fact that most adult and teen cases can be treated with aligners. If you are told you are not a candidate for Invisalign treatment you should get a second opinion.



Most people think that Invisalign does all the work, but the reality is, they provide the imaging software and they manufacture the aligners. The success of your treatment is dependent on good patient cooperation and a qualified, experienced orthodontist who has taken the time to evaluate, diagnose and treatment plan your case using Invisalign's software.

I hope this guide has been helpful to you and that it addressed some of your questions and concerns about orthodontic treatment. We encourage you to visit an orthodontic specialist to further discuss you or your child's orthodontic needs. To help you on the path to a healthy smile, we offer complimentary consultations with absolutely no obligation, so take the next step and pursue orthodontic treatment to get the smile you always wanted.



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