

Pain and discomfort: It takes up to one week to get accustomed to your braces. Initially your cheeks and tongue will chafe from rubbing against the brackets and bands. Your teeth will also feel sore but you will get used to your braces in a couple of days. After each adjustment of the braces, you will also feel some discomfort as your teeth start to move.

What can influence the treatment result?

Poor oral hygiene: Teeth not kept clean during treatment increase the risk of tooth decay or creates white spots on the teeth. The gums and supporting bone may also become inflamed if bacteria plaque is not removed daily.

Failing to comply with the use of braces and accessories: This is the most common cause of inferior results and increased treatment time.

Missed appointments: Treatment time is lengthened. In addition, missing appointments may affect the quality of the end result.

What are the limitations and potential risks associated with braces treatment?

Like all medical and dental treatment, orthodontic treatment has certain limitations and potential risks that you should be aware of. Do ask questions at the consultation, before treatment starts.

Damage to the nerve of the tooth: Sometimes, a tooth may have suffered a knock in a previous accident, or a tooth may have large fillings which can cause damage to the nerve of the root. Orthodontic tooth movement may aggravate these conditions and root canal treatment to remove the nerve of the root may be necessary.

Root shortening: In some patients, the roots of the teeth may be shortened during treatment. Usually, this is of no practical consequence, but sometimes, it may become a threat to the longevity of the tooth. If severe shortening occurs, treatment may have to be stopped.

Relapse: Teeth have a tendency to return toward their original position; this is called relapse. The use of retainers helps prevent this.

Abnormal growth and development: Growth disharmony and unusual tooth development are biological processes beyond the orthodontist's control. An unusual skeletal pattern and unfavourable growth may affect the final result. Surgical correction may sometimes be indicated during the course of orthodontic treatment.



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All About Braces



What is Orthodontics?

Orthodontics deals with the arrangement of teeth and the way teeth come together (the bite). Orthodontic treatment aims at bringing teeth and jaws into a harmonious position with the face. This may improve the appearance, oral health and function.



Before braces



After braces

Why do I need braces?

People have their teeth straightened for a variety of reasons. These include: dental health, appearance, speech, better chewing etc. Among these, dental health is the most important. Poorly aligned or crooked teeth are difficult to keep clean. They often give rise to decay and gum problems.

When is the best time to start treatment?

This depends on the type of orthodontic problem. For jaw-related cases, treatment generally starts while the child is still growing. This is between the ages of 9 to 11. For mal-aligned teeth not related to jaw problems, treatment can generally be delayed until all the primary teeth (milk teeth) have changed to permanent ones.

There is no age limit for orthodontic treatment. Adults can also benefit from orthodontic treatment.

What are the different types of braces available?

There are many different types of braces, each suited to a particular type of problem. The best type of brace for you will be advised by the Orthodontist depending on your teeth and your personal needs.

Removable braces are used on their own for simple problems in younger patients (usually under age 11) or

as part of a plan involving fixed braces. It consists of a plastic plate with wires and clips to hold the brace onto your teeth and is usually fitted to the top teeth.

Fixed braces are small attachments, called 'brackets', that are attached to the front of each individual tooth with a special adhesive, linked together by orthodontic wires. These attachments can be made of metal or a tooth-coloured material like porcelain (ceramic). Many teenage patients choose vibrant colours to customise their metal braces. Fixed braces such as Damon or other 'self-ligating' braces incorporate features (innovative ways of holding the wire in place) to help the teeth move more smoothly.



Tooth coloured braces



Coloured braces

Invisalign Aligners are clear removable braces which gradually straighten teeth when worn all the time. They are virtually unnoticeable and are good for less severe cases.

Lingual braces are fixed braces which are attached to the back of the teeth rather than the front. This means they are truly invisible so you can continue to smile with confidence throughout treatment. Because lingual braces are not visible they are ideal for adults or older teenagers who are concerned about the appearance of traditional fixed braces.

How long does treatment take?

Braces in orthodontic treatment need time to work. The normal period of treatment with fixed braces generally takes 2 to 3 years. The braces are fixed permanently on the teeth until the completion of treatment. You will need to make time every 4-8 weeks to visit your orthodontist regularly if you wish your treatment to finish well and on time.

For treatment to progress smoothly, you need to maintain good oral hygiene by brushing regularly, especially after every meal and snack. Remember to bring a travel toothbrush with you when you are not at home and avoid eating hard, sticky foods.

How will braces affect my daily life?

Speech: With regular fixed braces, speech is normally not affected at all. However, if your condition requires a palatal expander appliance to be fitted at the roof of your mouth, this may interfere with your speech. If you have lingual braces, you will take some time to learn to speak properly with the braces.

Playing musical instruments: If you play a musical instrument with a mouthpiece, it will take you one to two weeks before you become skilful as before.

Brushing with braces: With braces on, your teeth are more difficult to clean. Do not leave food on your braces. Brushing your teeth properly after every snack and meal will reduce the risk of decay and gum disease. In addition, 5 minutes of brushing are needed every morning and night. Have your toothbrush available to brush after meals as well as at your orthodontic visits. You can use disclosing solution to check if your teeth are clean. You will need to replace your toothbrush more often as it will wear out faster.

Eating and diet restrictions: Eating hard food or biting on large pieces of food may dislodge the brackets or bands and damage the wires. Avoid eating nuts and biting on nails or pencils. Do cut hard fruits into small and thin pieces before eating them. Avoid food and drinks with high sugar content such as sweets and soft drinks.