
Q. BRACES ARE FOR KIDS ONLY

A. Today, adults are becoming a larger segment undergoing braces treatment. Although it is best to have braces as a kid, it is never too late to get braces on. With better technology and availability of aesthetic / invisible braces, it is relatively easy for an adult to wear braces without any compromises.

Apart from making the teeth look better, braces are used on adults to correct bite problems that affect jaw joints, correct migrated teeth due to loss of teeth or periodontal problems, to prepare sites for implant placement, to correct tilted teeth in long standing extraction spaces to improve the quality of restorations etc.

Q. HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO WEAR BRACES?

A. On average, most treatments last for 1 to 3 years, but this can vary greatly for each person based on the severity of the problem. It also depends on the cooperation of the patient, including maintaining good oral hygiene, wearing auxiliaries such as rubber bands as directed, avoiding damaging food, and keeping all of their follow-up appointments.

Q. DO BRACES HAVE TO HURT OR FEEL TIGHT TO WORK

A. No pain no gain right? Well, not exactly. In the old days, only stiff wires were available. When tied to the **dental braces**, these stiff wires exerted heavy forces leading to more pain and discomfort for the patient. Now, with new technologies and flexible wires, there is significantly less discomfort associated with tooth movement. These days, you can have straight teeth with minimal discomfort.

Q. THE TIGHTER THE BETTER

A common comment we get from patients is, "Make it tighter, I want to get my **braces off** faster!" You may think that tighter adjustments and heavier forces will move your teeth faster. While a certain level of force is necessary to move teeth, a force level that is too high may start to damage the bone and surrounding tissues and actually delay the tooth movement.

Q. WIRES NEED TO BE CHANGED EVERY VISIT

A. Super-elastic wires of the present day can be bent into all different shapes and still spring back into their nice U-shaped form. These are long acting wires and continue to do their work for a long time. When a wire has done its job, your orthodontist will shift to the next set of wires which may be thicker in cross section or more rigid.

Q. DO I NEED TO SEE MY ORTHODONTIST IF ONE OF THE MODULES COME OFF?

A. If it is not hurting you, you can wait until your next visit. It will not delay the treatment. If it is bothering you, call us to book a quick emergency appointment to have it put back.

Q. A MAIN ARCH WIRE HAS COME OUT OF ITS TUBE. DO I NEED TO COME BEFORE MY NEXT VISIT?

A. If the wire is not hurting you, just leave it and we will fix it next visit. Or, if it's a problem, try to reinsert the wire into its tube yourself using needle-nosed pliers or eyebrow tweezers. Grab the wire, line it up with the hole and slide it back into position, flexing it if necessary. If you can't manage this and the wire is causing discomfort, call and schedule a brief emergency appointment during regular office hours to replace it. As a last resort, you can use a nail clipper or small wire cutter to cut the wire. But only cut wires if nothing else works, you're in pain, and you can't get to the office.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF A BRACKET FALLS OFF?

A. This is generally not an emergency unless you are going to get your braces off soon. Although it is not an emergency always notify us before your next visit so we can allow extra time to replace it.

Q. MY TEETH ARE MOVING TO THE WRONG DIRECTION, IS THIS NORMAL?

A. This is completely normal and only temporary. Your teeth have to move in lots of directions until they are in their final position.

Q. IS IT EASY TO TRANSFER OR SWITCH ORTHODONTISTS?

A. Though it may just look like braces and wires to you, every orthodontist uses slightly different wires, brackets, and appliances. Sometimes, the wires that one orthodontist uses would not even fit in the braces that another orthodontist uses. Each orthodontist also has his or her own technique in treating each case. Sorting out the finances is another difficult part of switching orthodontists because different offices structure their payment plans in different ways. If you switch orthodontists, you probably will end up paying more money than if you had just stayed with one orthodontist.

Q. IS ANY OVERJET / OVERBITE IS BAD?

A. A mild overjet and overbite is perfectly normal and in fact essential for optimum functioning of teeth. A beautifully finished braces treatment will have 1- 2 mms of overjet and overbite. People with zero overbite (whose teeth bite together in the front) actually start wearing down their front teeth over time. So a small overbite actually protects the front teeth from wearing down. Of course, a large overbite can be problematic and needs to be treated with braces.

Q. DO I NEED TO SEE MY OWN DENTIST DURING ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT?

A. Yes definitely; the orthodontist only looks after the braces. Your teeth are actually at greater risk during orthodontic treatment and it is particularly important that you keep up regular contact with your own dentist.

Q. IS THE DATE THAT I AM SUPPOSED TO GET MY BRACES OFF IS SET IN STONE?

When patients are told before treatment that they will be in dental braces for a certain number of years, it is very easy to focus on that date. Usually, an orthodontist can judge from his or her experience what the typical time frame is to finish treatment. However this depends on many factors. Some factors that would slow down treatment include: broken braces, not brushing well, not coming in for regular appointments, and having dense bone. If you want to get your braces off on time, make sure you co-operate by brushing and flossing well, wearing your elastics, and showing up for your regular appointments.

Q. ONCE I GET MY BRACES OFF, WILL MY TEETH STAY STRAIGHT FOREVER?

A. Once your teeth are straight and your bite right, your braces will be taken off. Yet you need to follow specified protocol of wearing retainers for a few years. Sometimes in spite of wearing retainers for prescribed duration, some relapse can be seen in few patients. Most often, this relapse is very mild and cannot be noticed. Patients who have noticeable relapse may have to do selective retreatment with braces.

Q. HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO WEAR THE RETAINERS?

A. We advise all our patients to wear their retainers for as long as they want their teeth to remain straight. If you reduce the wear or stop wearing your retainers you should expect your teeth to move a little or in some cases a lot! Changes in the position of your teeth can continue throughout life and are part of the normal aging process. The only way to have permanently straight teeth is to continue to wear your retainers throughout life.

Q. WILL MY WISDOM TEETH MAKE MY TEETH CROOKED AGAIN?

A. There is very little evidence to support the fact that wisdom teeth cause crowding. If this was true, then your teeth would never get crowded after your wisdom teeth were extracted. In fact, people who never developed wisdom teeth or who had their wisdom teeth removed may still see their teeth get crooked over time. Teeth just tend to drift forward over time regardless of whether or not you have wisdom teeth.