

Accessible Orthodontics



MAKING SMILES STRAIGHT
FOR ADULTS & CHILDREN



New Patient Information Booklet

**For more information you can ask our Dental Team during an
appointment or visit our website
(www.accessible-orthodontics.co.uk)**

INTRODUCTION TO ORTHODONTICS

Orthodontics is a specialty field of dentistry. It is concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of malocclusions (improper bites), which is caused mainly by tooth and jaw misalignments.

The main aim of orthodontic treatment is to address and fix a range of structural issues affecting the teeth and jaw. Mostly, though not exclusively, this includes problems such as crowded or crooked teeth and also a poorly aligned bite (the way your top and bottom teeth 'fit' together when you bite or chew).

Another important benefit of orthodontic treatment is the aesthetic result that is achieved. Cosmetic improvements to a person's teeth and smile improve their self esteem and confidence. Often they are described by our patients who have completed treatment as life changing.

Methods

If the main goal of your Treatment is to promote realignment, a fixed multi-bracket and wire system is the most effective and efficient way to achieve this. The brackets and wires can be made from a range of materials including; stainless steel for metallic braces or ceramics for tooth coloured braces and wires. Higher end materials are used for lingual braces. Metal and ceramic systems are fixed to the front of your teeth while lingual braces are fixed to the back of your teeth. Clear plastic, removable aligners (in sequence) can also be used to achieve the same outcome, though, this method usually takes a bit longer.

EXAMPLES OF TREATMENT OPTIONS

Metallic Braces



Silver coloured metallic braces and wires are used to treat our NHS patients, mostly. The coloured elastics holding the wire in place allow our patient's to add some personalised style to their brace!

Ceramic Braces



Ceramic or tooth coloured brackets and wires are a very popular choice with our adults and teenagers. They are far less visible than metallic braces (not covered on the NHS)

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TREATMENT OPTIONS CONTINUED

Lingual Braces



Incognito (lingual) braces are a bespoke fixed appliance, designed individually to fit the exact shape of your teeth. This is a highly specialised treatment option that is completely invisible. No one will ever know (not covered on the NHS)

Invusalign Aligners



Invisalign aligners are removable clear plastic aligners that are designed individually to fit the exact shape of your teeth. They are invisible, removable and comfortable and are an excellent treatment option for a Patient with a mild to moderate orthodontic need (not covered under the NHS)

YOUR RETAINERS

After a course of active orthodontic Treatment, you will need to wear Retainers, which as the name suggests, holds your teeth in their new position. Retention is a critical component of your orthodontic treatment. It is just as important as the active stage when your teeth are moving. The Retainers are worn full-time for a period of up 6 months and then the amount of time you wear them starts to reduce as advised by your treating clinician. Failure to follow their instructions may result in your teeth moving back to their old position and all of your hard work relapsing - very quickly! There are three types of Retainer that you might have with the clear (essix) being the most common and the fixed being the least common. Permanent Fixed Retainers are not covered under the NHS (*)

Essix/Invisible Retainer



Hawley Retainer



Permanent Fixed Retainer



(*) – Lost or broken Retainers will incur a replacement charge for ALL Patients.

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WHAT TO EXPECT AT APPOINTMENTS

1st Consultation Appointment

Upon arrival at your 1st appointment you will be required to complete some important Forms including; Personal Details, Medical History, NHS details and Informed consent. **Please note** that Patients under the age of 18 will need to be accompanied by an adult. All Patients under the age of 18 are entitled to their first Consultation free of charge under the NHS.

You will then be escorted into the Surgery to meet one of our Orthodontists. The Orthodontist will conduct a Clinical Examination, similar to a General Checkup with your Dentist. If the Patient is under 18 years and the assessment shows that they meet criteria set by NHS England then their on-going Treatment will be covered on the NHS. Otherwise a Patient will undertake their Orthodontic treatment privately. Please enquire at Reception regarding a Consultation on a Private basis if 18 and over.

Prior to your Braces going on you will have digital X-rays and Impressions (moulds) taken of your teeth.

Approx Appointment Length – 30 mins

Fixed Appliance Fitting Appointment (full bands/upper bands/lower bands)

The Clinician will clean your teeth thoroughly, apply some etchant to smooth the surface of the tooth and then use a special glue to adhere the bracket to the tooth and a special light to instantly dry the glue. There are no needles or drills involved and the procedure is relatively painless.

Once your Braces have been fitted the Nurse will go through a range of instructions with you: it is very important to listen carefully to the instructions. You will then be given a 'New Patient Pack' which includes wax and further written instructions.

Approx Appointment Length – 45 mins

Oral Hygiene

You will only get your Braces fitted if you already have good oral hygiene. How well it is being maintained will be checked at each appointment. If you don't maintain good oral hygiene, the Nurse will run through some instructions with you using models and toothbrushes. You help your Treatment by following those instructions properly. **NOTE THAT** constantly poor oral hygiene may mean your Braces are removed, permanently. In that case there is no opportunity to get further NHS orthodontic treatment.

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Removable Appliance Preparation (Impressions)

If it has been decided, as part of your initial treatment plan, that you require a removable or functional appliance then you will have more Impressions (moulds) taken of your teeth. These are then sent away to an Orthodontic Laboratory for the Appliance to be made. A follow up appointment would be made for 8-10 days during which you would have the appliance fitted.

Approx Appointment Length – 10 -15 mins

General 8 Weekly Appointment (Archwire change)

Once your Braces or appliance has been fitted you will be required to attend Appointments about every 8 weeks, unless requested otherwise by the Orthodontist, or you have a problem in-between Appointments.

Those Appointments consist of general maintenance of your Braces such as removing the existing archwire and replacing it with a stronger one.

Approx Appointment Length – 10 - 15 min

Removal of Fixed Braces Appointment (Bands Off)

Once you (your parent/guardian) and the Orthodontist decide that the Treatment is complete and are both happy that a suitable result has been achieved, your Braces will be removed.

The brackets and archwire are clipped off using special pliers and the remaining glue removed from the surface of the teeth using a special 'polishing burr'. Wearing braces and their subsequent removal won't cause any damage to your teeth. Before you leave, Impressions (moulds) taken of your teeth in order for Retainers to be made.

Please note that if you request the Braces to be removed before the Orthodontist agrees that the Treatment is complete an appropriate adult (parent/guardian) must accompany the (under 18 years old) Patient in order to sign an NHS form requesting that the Braces be removed early.

Approx Appointment Length –30 mins

Retainer Fitting Appointment

Your Retainers are usually ready within 2 weeks, to be fitted in the Practice. Your Clinician will ensure your Retainers are fitting correctly in your mouth and adjust if needed. The Orthodontic Nurse will then go through a range of instructions with you including how to care for your Retainers and how often you should wear them. This will also be given to you in writing. NOTE THAT if a replacement is required – for **any** reason – there will be a cost which you will have to pay before new Impressions are taken and a new Retainer made.

Approx Appointment Length – 10 mins

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COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long will I have to wear my Braces? - It really depends on how much work there is to do and how far your teeth need to be moved. **Fixed Braces** usually take between 18 and 24 months although this can be significantly shorter. **Removable Braces** usually take less time than Fixed Braces. However they may be used before a treatment starts using Fixed Braces.

Is putting the Braces on going to hurt? - No! We don't use any needles. The brackets are held onto the tooth surface with special glue.

Are Braces hard to look after? – No! You will receive clear, simple instructions on this AND your own "Oral Hygiene" Information Booklet.

How often should I visit the Orthodontist? – Usually you will have an appointment every 8 weeks. It is **extremely important** that you attend each appointment, otherwise your Braces will not be working effectively.

You should also remember to continue to visit your general Dentist for regular check up appointments.

Will my mouth be sore in between visits? – Your mouth is very sensitive and will take a couple of days to get used to wearing your Braces. When first fitted and also after adjustment appointments, tenderness can occur. In that case see 'Emergency Care / Pain Management' (**Fixed Braces Information Booklet**) for details of what you can or should do.

Will I be able to speak normally? – Sometimes when Braces are fitted, it may affect your speech and cause problems in pronouncing certain words, but within a couple of days most people quickly adapt and begin to speak clearly again. Practice reading, speaking even singing out loud!

Can I play sports while wearing my Braces? – Yes! If you have Removable Braces then it is best to take it out while playing any sport. If you have Fixed Braces you should wear a special mouth guard over them. Speak with our Nursing or Reception Staff for details.

Can I still play a musical instrument? – Yes! Braces may affect playing wind instruments, although with practice you should get used to it. If problems still occur ask your Orthodontist or Nurse about comfi-lip guards. They are specially designed for Patients who wish to continue to play wind instruments.

Are there costs involved? – For NHS Patients your Braces are not charged to you. If you want consumables like toothpaste, or special brushes etc the cost you pay is clearly displayed.