

Your first visit to the orthodontist

Before you come to see the orthodontist you may have some questions you would like answered about this first visit.

Why have I been referred to the orthodontist? Your dentist would like specialist advice about the position of your teeth. The orthodontist will advise whether you would benefit from orthodontic treatment.

What is orthodontic treatment? Orthodontic treatment usually involves the wearing of braces (removable or fixed) often the extraction of teeth, and very occasionally jaw surgery.

Why might I need orthodontic treatment? There are 3 main reasons for having orthodontic treatment: ·

To improve the appearance of the teeth.

To improve function i.e. to make it easier to eat.

To improve the health of the teeth and gums.

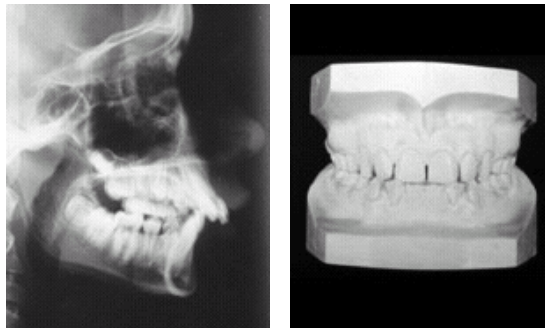
The following pictures show the teeth of a patient before and after orthodontic treatment



Before treatment

After treatment

What will happen at my first appointment? It is likely the orthodontist will have a look at your mouth and teeth using a small mouth mirror and a ruler. X-rays, photographs and moulds (impressions) may also be taken. All of these measurements and records will help the orthodontist decide which is the best treatment for you.



X-ray of the teeth
and jaws

A model made from
moulds

What will happen next? There are likely to be four possible outcomes, each of which will be explained to you in plain and simple language by the orthodontist. These include:

You are not yet ready for treatment, in which case you may need to see the orthodontist again when you are older.

Your dental health is not good enough. This may be due to poor toothbrushing or decayed teeth. Your dentist may send

you to the orthodontist again when things have improved.

You do not need treatment because the position of your teeth is perfectly acceptable, or expected to be.

You are ready for treatment and need to decide whether to go ahead.

What happens if I am ready to start treatment?

The orthodontist will explain:

The options for treatment and which is the best for you.

The pros and cons of treatment.

The length of time the treatment will take.

The commitment needed on your part if treatment is to be successful.

When you can expect the treatment to begin.

At this point you will be given the chance to ask any questions. If you would like to go ahead with the treatment, the orthodontist may ask for written consent.

When will treatment start?

This will depend on:

How many of your adult teeth have come through. Many treatments are best left until the adult teeth have replaced the first teeth.

Problems with toothbrushing or tooth decay which may have to be dealt with.

The length of any waiting list for the particular orthodontic treatment you need.

The degree of urgency for your particular case. For example, certain types of bite are best treated while you are growing fast and would be given priority. Other types of treatment may need to be delayed until growth of the face has almost stopped.

Your orthodontist will explain the exact timing of the treatment for you.



Who will carry out the treatment?

The orthodontist often carries out the treatment personally, although in some cases another member of staff may treat you. On occasions your own dentist will be asked to treat you under the guidance of the orthodontist. Your dentist will usually carry out any extractions that are necessary as part of the treatment. If you have any further questions that you feel you would like to ask, then please write them down and bring them with you to your next appointment. It is important you fully understand what is involved in having orthodontic treatment before you decide to go ahead.

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