



## important information

### Our Commitment

Our practice aims to provide consistent quality orthodontic care for all patients and we have systems which define our responsibilities when looking after you. In proposing treatment, we will:

- ☞ Take account of your wishes
- ☞ Do all we can to look after your general health
- ☞ Ensure practice working methods are reviewed regularly
- ☞ Ask patients for their views on our services.

### Family Dentist

This practice is limited to orthodontic treatment only, therefore any other dental treatments will be provided by your own dentist. We recommend that you have your teeth checked before your orthodontic treatment begins and at regular intervals specified by your dentist.

### Oral Hygiene

Oral health advice is available from our qualified staff at all time.

### Emergencies

In the event of breakages or problems, please contact us for assistance or for an emergency appointment. Emergency appointments are accommodated where spaces are available. We offer an out of hours emergency help line, which can be accessed by ringing the normal surgery telephone number, This is for patients who are in pain and discomfort only.

### Complaints

We have an established complaints procedure and we take complaints very seriously. We welcome any comments regarding problems you may have with our staff or our service. Initially, persons responsible for dealing with any complaints are the Practice Managers.

### Personal Information

We like to keep as many contact telephone numbers on record as possible but, under the Data Protection Act, you can advise us if you do not wish to be contacted on any of them, e.g. at work. we will not pass your details to any outside body, unless referring you to another practitioner e.g. dentist, periodontist, surgeon or hospital.

### Access

Unfortunately, we have no disabled access to our Harpenden practice. Treatment may be available at our St. Albans practice for anyone who requires ground floor access.

## further information

**Further information can be obtained about our registration with the Care Quality Commission:**

CQC National Correspondence, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA  
Tel: 03000 616161, [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

**British Dental Association**  
Tel: 0207 835 0875  
[www.bda-dentistry.org.uk](http://www.bda-dentistry.org.uk)

**British Orthodontic Society**  
Tel: 0207 353 8680  
[www.bos.org.uk](http://www.bos.org.uk)

**Hertfordshire and The South Midlands Area Team**  
Charter House, Parkway, Welwyn Garden City,  
Hertfordshire, AL8 6JL  
Tel: 01707 390855

We look forward to our association with you and welcome any questions you may have



## what is orthodontics

Orthodontics is a specialised field of dentistry for the treatment of dental and facial irregularities. It is the science of studying, diagnosing and treating misaligned teeth and jaws. Dentists whose practices are limited to orthodontics usually have 2-4 additional years of postgraduate training in this field.

Orthodontics is about creating a beautiful smile by considering the patient's face, profile, bone structure and muscular function, and balancing these various elements perfectly using the latest technologies available.

Through the combination of these two vital aspects, we can transform your smile to boost your confidence and self-esteem, resulting in healthy teeth, an efficient bite and a fantastic smile you can be proud of - no matter what your age!

## the benefits of orthodontic treatment

A good orthodontic result does not happen just because we fit your mouth with a brace. We believe orthodontics is a partnership between you and us, with shared responsibility. The quality of the result also depends on the amount of effort you put in. We will provide you with routine guidance and advice throughout your treatment.

The more enthusiasm, interest and dedication you show towards your treatment, the quicker it will be finished and with better results. It is essential that you attend appointments on a regular basis, keep your brace clean and safe and avoid foods which can interfere with a successful outcome.

### The dental benefits of orthodontics include:

- ☞ Straight teeth which are easier to clean, resulting in a healthier mouth and gums
- ☞ Reduction of uneven wear of your teeth
- ☞ Correction of jaw and joint problems

Straight teeth and a great smile will improve your appearance, giving you greater confidence and improved self-esteem.





## frequently asked questions

### How often will you need appointments?

During active treatment we will need to see you every 6-10 weeks, and in the retention phase we will need to see you every 3-6 months.

We aim to be flexible in our appointment planning to ensure your treatment progresses smoothly and with optimum results.

### How does orthodontic treatment work?

All braces used in orthodontic treatment have one main aim - to use gentle pressure to move teeth into the desired position.

There are usually 2 phases of treatment:

1. An active correction phase
2. A stabilising retention phase

In the active correction phase, it is more common to use upper and lower fixed braces because:

1. Not only can the teeth in each separate jaw be treated, but the vital relationship between the upper and lower teeth (the bite) can also be corrected for maximum efficiency.
2. 3D control over ALL teeth ensures accurate and positive positioning of teeth.
3. Maximum health and function can be achieved in harmony with the face and other related soft tissues.

Abnormal facial growth patterns resulting in a disharmonious relationship between teeth and jaws can be treated in children with certain appliances directed at growth modification. In adults, a different approach involving combined orthodontic and surgical treatment may be required. However, recent technological advances allow for more complex treatment without the need for surgery.

Until recently, conventional braces were made of metal brackets and, in some cases, these are still the only viable option to achieve the necessary correction. New generations of braces result in a more aesthetically pleasing appearance during treatment.



### How long will you need to wear braces?

This depends on a variety of factors, the most important being the complexity of your problem. We will give you an idea of how long your treatment will take when you come for an examination. Generally, active treatment takes between 1-2 years, followed by a supervised phase of a year.

### When is it best to start orthodontic treatment?

Orthodontic treatment can be successful at any age because teeth and tissues are essentially the same in both adults and children. Most orthodontic treatment is started during teenage years as this is when the permanent teeth grow into place. However, it is never too early to start thinking about orthodontics and it is generally recommended that children are evaluated by the age of 8. Equally, you are never too old for orthodontic treatment either, although a slightly longer treatment plan may be expected due to the bone structure being denser in adults.

### How do you know if you need treatment?

It is estimated that more than 50% of the population could benefit from some form of orthodontic treatment. Some things to look for are:

- Are your teeth noticeably crooked?
- Do you have gaps between your teeth?
- Are your teeth crowded?
- Do you have protruding teeth?
- Do you have a deep bite?
- Do you have an open bite?
- Do you have difficulty chewing your food?

Other signs that orthodontic treatment may be appropriate are chronic headaches, neck/jaw pain and clicking sounds when you open your mouth. All of these may be symptomatic of jaw/joint disorders.

If you are at all hesitant to smile, laugh or even talk in public, because you are conscious of the appearance of your teeth, it is time to seriously consider orthodontic treatment.