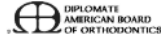


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“The 10 Things You Must Know Before Choosing Your Family’s Orthodontist”

1. Orthodontics does far more than just straighten teeth.

Sculpting a beautiful smile safely requires a deep understanding of growth and development. Far beyond tooth alignment, an orthodontist focuses enormous attention on the details of facial balance and harmony and the aging process. Orthodontics not only significantly improves one's smile but also improves bad bites (malocclusions). Malocclusions occur as a result of tooth or jaw misalignment and can affect the way you smile, chew, clean your teeth, feel about your smile and even speak. An Orthodontic specialist can have a number of tools to insure a customized treatment plan that best suits your needs including not only traditional braces and Invisalign but also state of the art procedures such as SureSmile® (digital precision, faster, more predictable treatment), Wilckodontics® (periodontally accelerated orthodontics) and Lingual braces (completely hidden behind the teeth). Choosing an orthodontist is like choosing a plastic surgeon... the outcome not only affects your oral health but is there to be seen by everyone, today and for many years to come.

2. So who should you trust?

While it is legal for a general dentist to perform orthodontic procedures, such as Invisalign® or even traditional braces, they are not licensed orthodontic specialists. This may sound like a fine line, but it really isn't. A hint of the answer is that most dentists themselves send their own children and family to be treated by orthodontists. An orthodontist is a dental specialist who has completed a fiercely competitive 2-3 additional years of training beyond dental school to develop further expertise in straightening teeth and ensuring proper form, function and stability. A select 33% of these orthodontists then go on to become board certified or Diplomates of the American Board of Orthodontics. To choose a treatment plan that best suits your needs it is critical that your doctor has at their disposal the latest, state of the art treatment solutions.

3. When is the right time to start treatment?

The American Association of Orthodontists strongly urges patients to have an orthodontic screening exam by age seven. The reason is a simple one; orthodontists are specifically trained to assess normal childhood facial and dental development. As such they are the experts at recognizing when growth and development is not occurring properly. Most patients will not be ready for any type of orthodontic intervention at age seven, but it is a real comfort to a parent to know how their child is doing and what might they expect in the future. Although orthodontic treatment is possible at any age, there is an ideal time when the most advanced techniques will produce the optimal and most economical results.

An experienced orthodontist can clearly see by age seven whether developmental issues will turn into problems. Early detection of severe crowding, impacted teeth, premature loss of baby teeth, under-bites, cross bites, or other unfavorable developmental issues may need to be addressed right away. That means doing early treatment, around age 7 or 8, with limited goals. This treatment can last 6-12 months, at a time when the patient still has 10-12 baby teeth. There can be many scenarios, based on individual diagnosis, but most consist of **partial braces** on a few permanent teeth, and sometimes fixed or removable appliances of some form. No matter how this is done, inevitably, a second round of full braces will be necessary when all the permanent teeth grow in. The second phase of orthodontic treatment typically comes around age 11 or 12.

4. How does my child benefit from early treatment?

Be wary! There is significant research in the area of multiphase orthodontic treatment that suggests that early treatment is, indeed, effective, but it does not correct more than what could have been accomplished more efficiently in one single round of comprehensive treatment at a later age, during peak individual growth spurt. A young child that has severe bite problems, however, may benefit from early treatment to correct extreme skeletal discrepancies (such as under or over bites), significant crowding, as well as cross bites that cause the jaws to shift out of place, or are damaging the teeth and gums.

Although your child may not require orthodontia yet, it is still highly recommended that they return for observation appointments and wait until treatment can be accomplished more efficiently and effectively. In order to make your orthodontic experience as simple as possible, ask what your child gains, in the long-run, from starting early treatment and whether it is truly justified. If you are still uncertain, seek a second opinion!

5. Orthodontic treatment is not just for children any longer!

Many adult patients are finding out how a healthy, attractive smile can enhance their careers, as well as their self-esteem, happiness and health. In addition, treatment time can be greatly reduced as well. Several new procedures available today, such as: **SureSmile**[®] (digital precision orthodontics), **Wilckodontics**[®] (periodontally accelerated orthodontics), **lingual** braces (completely hidden behind the teeth), and **Invisalign**[®] are much more convenient for a busy adult's schedule. Find an orthodontist qualified in number of proposed techniques so the treatment plan that will correct your problems in a predictable, precise and timely manner may be chosen.

6. Compliance and Hygiene.

No matter what techniques are used, it is important to wear your appliances the number of hours prescribed by your orthodontist. Patients that repeatedly break brackets, do not wear elastics/rubber bands and do not follow the prescribed treatment plan will be in braces longer. The success of treatment depends in large part on the patient cooperation. Patients that have difficulty with compliance and or oral hygiene will need to be especially careful in choosing an orthodontist that has treatment plans and procedures that will best accommodate their needs. SureSmile[®], for example, is almost 40% faster than conventional braces thereby allowing a quick return to a normal hygiene routine. However, it still requires a large deal of compliance!

7. Invisalign[®] Orthodontics.

Numerous adults and teenagers are now able to have their teeth straightened without anyone ever knowing they are in treatment. This is due to a relatively new technology where clear aligners can be used to progressively straighten the teeth (Invisalign[®]). While Invisalign[®] aligners are not for everyone, most teens and adults that have relatively simple problems can improve their smile with this nearly invisible technology. More complicated cases, however, will benefit from traditional orthodontics where control in all three planes of space with individual brackets attached to each tooth is crucial for an optimal result.

Invisalign[®] aligners will differ greatly from doctor to doctor. The dentist or orthodontist who is providing aligner treatment has significant input into the design of the aligners and how they will move the teeth. In other words, the treating doctor needs to know the bio-mechanics of how teeth move and what other side effects will happen and how to counteract them to insure optimal treatment. Results are a function of the doctor competence and experience. Align technology as a company, started to limit the certification of dentists that are using their Invisalign[®] system to control quality results. Invisalign[®] aligners need to be worn 22 hours per day, seven days a week, throughout the entire process and can be removed only for eating, brushing and flossing. If you do not have the discipline to wear them, no tooth movement will happen!

8. SureSmile[®] Digital Orthodontic System.

Digital precision is redefining orthodontics. By integrating technology into to the delivery of orthodontics, SureSmile[®] delivers precise, predictable results nearly 40% faster than traditional braces. In the age of digital orthodontics, a

SureSmile® orthodontist requires even further training. Using advanced 3-D imaging and tooth imaging scanning, planning software, and robotic accuracy, the orthodontist's capabilities to diagnose issues, communicate with referring doctors and patients and predict treatment results are tremendously enhanced. SureSmile® orthodontists achieve the best possible smile in significantly less time.

With SureSmile® technology, computer software maps out the optimal distance teeth need to be moved while the shape-memory alloy wires apply constant, steady pressure to move teeth into the finishing position without any missteps. The teeth move more directly to their target positions thereby reducing the total treatment time. Aided by virtual treatment planning and computer and robot facilitated wire bending, SureSmile® orthodontists can simulate different treatment scenarios to determine the optimal treatment plan.

9. Wilckodontics® and Lingual Braces.

Patients that would decline conventional orthodontics strictly due to the length of treatment now have a viable alternative. It is called Accelerated Osteogenic Orthodontics™ (AOO™) or Wilckodontics®. It was developed to permit safe and rapid movement of the teeth and to achieve a stable result, as long as patients are committed to be seen for orthodontic adjustment appointments every two weeks. The procedure is feasible for most patients, regardless of age, as long as their permanent teeth are present. With the Wilckodontics® system, most orthodontic cases in both adolescents and adults can be completed 3 to 4 times faster than would be possible with conventional orthodontics. As a result, the total treatment time in braces can be reduced to 3 to 8 months!

Lingual Orthodontics are designed for patients who would rather not advertise their orthodontic treatment and choose not to wear removable aligners (invisible braces inside surfaces of teeth). The lingual braces are an excellent alternative if you want the invisibility of treatment without compromising the quality of the results. Due to advancements in wires and bracket design, **Lingual Orthodontics** has undergone a process of simplification; the brackets have smaller profiles, with rounded contours to reducing interferences and minimize speech difficulties. The wires are flexible and can be robotically or manually bent for precise accuracy to achieve highly predictable tooth movement. The benefits of the lingual braces is that you have a custom wire that incorporates all the prescribed tooth movements with a custom small bracket in a completely invisible environment, since there is nothing on the outside of the teeth. In summary, lingual systems address aesthetic concerns without compromising treatment results.

10. Smile with Style, Smile with Confidence!

Choosing your orthodontist is a long term commitment that should not be taken lightly. Orthodontic treatment consists of between 1 and sometimes 3 years of active treatment, and 1 to 2 years of retention and follow-up. An Orthodontist trained in the latest technologies will help you choose not only between Invisalign® or traditional (clear or metal) braces, but advanced systems such as SureSmile®, Wilckodontics® and Lingual (behind the teeth) braces. This qualified person will be instrumental in insuring a beautiful healthy smile, in balance and harmony with your facial features. I encourage you to do your homework and call us for a complimentary consultation and insurance check benefits...and find out for yourself what it would take to get that smile that you always deserved.

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