



## Orthodontic Treatment

Although there is not an exact age to start orthodontic treatment, both American and British Association of Orthodontists recommends visiting the orthodontist around age seven to make sure that jaws and teeth are growing at a normal rate. This will allow the orthodontist to diagnose and if needed, correct the tooth and jaw alignment as soon as they are detected.

**An orthodontist is a dental specialist whose expertise lies in the field of correcting bites, occlusion and straightening of teeth. After obtaining their dental degree an orthodontist completes three additional years of education in an accredited orthodontic program.**

### WHAT IS THE TWO-PHASE TREATMENT AND WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES?

Two-phase orthodontic treatment is a specialized process which combines orthodontics with dento-facial orthopedics. This allow the orthodontist to change the growth rate of the jaws and the facial bones when the patient is young. Two-phase treatment is important because it maximizes the opportunity to accomplish the ideal healthy, aesthetic, and functional result that will remain beautiful throughout your life.

A confident smile and good oral health make a great difference in your child's well-being and self-confidence at this critical time of their life. Although braces for teens are more common, braces for children can ensure better end results as your child continues to grow and develop.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF TREATMENT IS DELAYED?

Delaying Phase One orthodontic treatment can result in a need for more aggressive and lengthy treatment later in life that may not completely fix the skeletal issues since the growth can not be modified anymore. In these cases early treatment is essential for achieving ideal and lasting results.

### HOW DOES THE TWO-PHASE TREATMENT WORK?

Orthodontic treatment is planned and carried out in 2 phases with resting/monitoring period between them.

### PHASE ONE / EARLY TREATMENT

#### EARLY TREATMENT ALLOWS ORTHODONTIST TO:

- Correct and guide the growth of your child's jaw to help the permanent teeth come in straight
- Regulate the width of the upper and lower arches
- Create more space for crowded teeth
- Avoid the need for permanent tooth extractions later in life
- Correct thumb-sucking and help improve minor speech problems

The goals of phase one treatment are to help the jaw develop in a way that will accommodate all of the permanent teeth and improve the way the upper and lower jaws fit together. Early signs of jaw problems can be detected in children as they grow and develop. For instance, an upper jaw that is growing too forward or is too narrow compared to the lower jaw can be recognized at an early age. These children are great candidates for orthodontic treatment since these problems are easily corrected at an early age. Crowding could also be addressed at this time.

Children benefit greatly from early phase treatment. Receiving early treatment can prevent the removal of permanent teeth later in life, and the need for surgery to correct any jaw abnormalities.

**The duration of this phase is typically twelve to eighteen months.**

## **PHASE TWO**

Not all Orthodontic patients require Phase Two treatment, however when required it begins when all permanent teeth have erupted and usually involves braces.

The goal of the second phase is to ensure each tooth is in the correct location in the mouth where it fits perfectly with the lips, tongue, cheeks and other teeth.

When this balance is established, your child's teeth will function together effectively.

Retainers are worn after Phase Two - this ensures stability of the bite and your child's beautiful new smile.