

Dental Procedure Information

Orthodontic Treatment

Patient Co-operation

This is the most important factor in completing treatment on time. Insufficient wearing of elastics, removable appliances, headgear or neck-strap; broken appliances and missed appointments will lengthen treatment time and adversely affect the outcome of treatment.

Appointments & Dental Check-ups

Orthodontic treatment requires routine orthodontic visits. Before deciding on treatment, you will have to accept the need for regular adjustment visits every 4-6 weeks throughout the full course of treatment. All necessary dentistry must be completed prior to orthodontic therapy. It is essential that you maintain your regular dental check-ups during the treatment period.

Extraction

It is often necessary to have certain permanent teeth extracted as part of the treatment. This is usually because the jaw is not large enough to hold all the teeth. The space created by their removal will allow the remaining teeth to be straightened. Usually the extractions are carried out by the referring Dental Officer but in certain cases you may need to be referred to other specialists.

Impacted Teeth - Teeth Unable to Erupt Normally

In attempting to remove impacted teeth, especially canines, various problems are sometimes encountered which may lead to loss of tooth or periodontal (gum) problems. The length of time required to move such a tooth can vary considerably. Occasionally second molars may be trapped under the crowns of the first molars; consequently the removal of third molars (wisdom teeth) may prove necessary. Not all impacted teeth can be treated successfully.

Decalcification / Dental Decay

Decalcification are unsightly white spots developing on the teeth around the appliances, often a result of inadequate oral hygiene, breakage or loosening of the appliance for a period of time. The decalcified areas are weakened enamel that can become decay. It is important to brush your teeth and gum immediately after eating and to use a fluoride mouthwash if required. The avoidance of hard and sticky foods will keep bands and brackets from loosening. The reduction of sugar intake, as well as reporting any loose bands as soon as they are noticed, will help to minimize decalcification and decay. Should oral hygiene become a problem, treatment may need to be terminated before completion.

Periodontal (Gum) Problems

Swollen and bleeding gum can usually be prevented by proper and regular flossing and brushing. Periodontal disease can be caused by accumulation of plaque (bacterial deposit) around the teeth and gum but there are other causes that can lead to progressive loss of the supporting bone. Prolonged treatment with poor oral hygiene will result in worsening of the periodontal condition of the teeth. Should the condition become uncontrollable, orthodontic treatment may have to be discontinued before it is completed. In the case of crowded teeth with pre-existing periodontal disease, bone loss will manifest as triangular spaces between the teeth after alignment.

Discomfort

Different types of orthodontic appliances can cause discomfort in the oral cavity such as mild dental pain and mucosal ulcers which are usually transient.

Non-vital Tooth - Usually the Result of Tooth Injury

A tooth can become non-vital due to injury or caries. An injured tooth can lose its vitality over a period of time with or without orthodontic treatment and the tooth may look darker. An undetected non-vital tooth may flare-up during orthodontic treatment requiring root canal treatment. Such discoloration may also be noticed after treatment has started or following the removal of the appliance. Loss of tooth vitality due to orthodontic treatment is rare.

Root Resorption/ Shortening of Root Ends

This can occur with or without treatment. Under healthy conditions the shortened roots are usually of no consequence. On rare occasions, root resorption may threaten the longevity, stability, and/ or mobility of the affected teeth. Tooth injury or impaction, endocrine or idiopathic disorders, can also be responsible for root shortening.

Temporomandibular Joints (TMJ)

The sliding hinge connecting the upper and lower jaws is called the TMJ. Possible problems may pre-exist or occur during or following orthodontic treatment. TMJ problems are not all bite related. Its occurrence during treatment is more often coincidental. Joint problems occurring during treatment should be reported promptly to your orthodontist.

Contact Sports

It is advisable to wear a mouth guard if you play contact sports.

Unfavorable Growth

Occasionally the growth of the jaws becomes disproportionate during or after treatment. This can limit our ability to achieve the desired result and cause shifting of teeth during or following treatment. Jaw growth is a biological process beyond the orthodontist control. On some occasions it may be necessary to recommend a change in the original treatment plan. Surgical procedures (mostly by Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Specialist) may be needed to correct these problems. Uncorrected habits can all influence growth and results.

General Medical Problems

These can affect your orthodontic treatment. Please keep the orthodontist informed about any change.

Relapse of Aligned Teeth Following Treatment

Tooth position is constantly changing throughout life. This is true with all individuals regardless of whether they had orthodontic treatment or not. Teeth have a tendency to change their positions after treatment. Settling or shifting of teeth following treatment as well as after retention will most likely occur in varying degrees. Some of these changes may or may not be desirable. Rotations and crowding of lower anterior teeth are most common examples. Slight spaces in the extraction sites or between some upper anterior teeth are other examples. These changes are usually mild and faithful wearing of retainers should reduce this tendency. At times we advise the wearing of a retaining appliance 24 hours every day during first year of retention and switch to 8-10 hours every night during bed time in second year.

Unusual Occurrence

Swallowing or aspirating parts of an appliance, dislodging a restoration, chipping of teeth may rarely occur.

Treatment Results

The treatment results are limited by various biological parameters often beyond the orthodontist control such as the sizes and shapes of teeth, the pattern of growth of the facial and jaw bones, the level of growth discrepancy between the upper and lower jaws, the amount of correction required, the amount of space made available etc. Treatment within these parameters is individualized and may not be treated to one's wish. The results are not comparable between patients.

Remarks: Should you have any enquiries, please consult your doctor.

Compiled by Union Hospital Consent Form Taskforce

The above information is for reference only, please enquire your physician for details
Our Hospital reserves the RIGHT to amend any information in this leaflet without prior notification