

Braces



Creating a
new smile

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Creating a new smile

Choosing to create a new smile for yourself or for your child is a big step involving commitment. A new smile can bring many things, including improved dental health, the ability to more easily clean teeth and gums, the ability to speak clearly and chew properly, an enhanced appearance, and a new confidence regarding your smile. All of these are valuable things, and your commitment to achieving them will help make them a reality.

Before, during, and after treatment we will work closely with you and your child to achieve your goals. Before treatment, we will consult with you about the different choices available for treatment, the benefits of treatment, the time commitment, what you'll be required to do at home, the number and type of office visits, and the expected treatment length and cost.

During treatment, we will regularly check to make sure your treatment is progressing as planned, and we will handle any emergency situation that arises. In addition, we will continue to educate you about healthy dental hygiene with your orthodontic appliances. Just prior to the end of treatment, we will determine if your goals have been met, and we will recommend what type of at home treatment to continue.

We value you as a patient, and we will listen closely to you regarding your concerns and wishes. We have successfully created new smiles for many patients—adults, teens, and children—by understanding their needs and desires. Together we can create a new smile for you.

What are the options?

Today there are many orthodontic treatment options that are called braces. By “braces” we mean orthodontic treatment that consists of brackets which are physically bonded to each tooth and are not removable by the patient. The different types of braces include traditional metal braces, clear or ceramic braces, coloured braces, self-ligating braces, lingual braces, and partial braces. This guide describes each of these options in detail.

Some patients are mostly concerned about their appearance during treatment. For them, some good options are clear braces or lingual braces.

Other patients are more concerned about comfort. A good option for them is Empower self-ligating braces.

Other patients are concerned about cost. The most affordable options are traditional metal braces and coloured braces.

At your consultation appointment we will outline each treatment option available for your specific needs. We will listen to your concerns and answer any of your questions.

Our goal is to form a partnership in creating your new smile.

Braces

Braces straighten teeth and can significantly enhance your appearance, but braces serve more purposes than just improving your looks. Poorly aligned teeth can make teeth difficult to clean, which can result in tooth decay and gum disease. And a poorly aligned bite can cause excessive wear on certain teeth. This can lead to loss of the teeth. Braces can prevent these types of problems before they become severe.

To better accommodate the needs and preferences of our patients, we offer a variety of options for braces.

Braces consist of brackets, an arch wire, and elastic bands. Brackets are small, metal devices that are bonded to the front surface of each tooth. Brackets today are smaller and smoother than the brackets of just a few years ago.



The arch wire is a single wire that is attached to each of the brackets on the upper arch (and there is an arch wire for the lower arch) and provides the force which moves the teeth. We offer a variety of options for the type of brackets, the colour of ligatures, and even the colour of the arch wire. We also offer lingual braces which are placed on the backside of each tooth.

At your first visit we will examine your teeth, mouth, and jaw and will take photographs, x-rays, and measurements. We will also take impressions (moulds) of your teeth. We do this by filling a mouth tray with elastic impression material and place it into your mouth. You bite into the tray and hold the position for a number of minutes as the material forms to your teeth. This mould will be the model for a plaster cast of your mouth.

Braces continued...

Next, we will discuss what type of treatment would be best for your orthodontic needs. We will also describe the expected length and cost of treatment.

During treatment we will teach how to keep your braces clean by brushing and flossing. It's important to continue with good oral hygiene while wearing braces so that the surface of your teeth and your gums stay healthy. We will also explain how to cover a wire or bracket with wax if it is irritating your cheek or gums.

If your teeth are crowded, you may need an arch expander, also called a palatal expander, to widen the arch (upper or lower arch) and thus create more room. Sometimes this treatment alone can correct a misaligned bite.

Clear Braces

Clear braces are an excellent alternative for patients who desire less-noticeable braces. The brackets on these braces are made of ceramic and blend in nicely with the colour of your teeth.

Some other options available to minimize the appearance of braces include an arch wire that is coated with tooth-coloured paint and clear ligatures (elastic bands).

Because ceramic braces are not as strong as metal braces, we typically put ceramic braces on the top front teeth and metal braces on the bottom.



Coloured Braces

Coloured braces refers to the different colours of ligatures (elastic bands) that are available to attach the arch wire to the bracket. Ligatures are replaced at appointments, and many children and teens like to choose brightly coloured elastic bands. We have a few dozen different colours including pastels, metallic colours, and glow-in-the-dark colours.



EMPOWER Braces

EMPOWER braces (also called self-ligating braces) are an exciting new type of technology and design for brackets that are bonded to the front surface of the teeth. These brackets are smooth with rounded edges and are specially designed to hold the arch wire in place with a hinged slot, called a passive slide mechanism. This hinged slot eliminates the need for an elastic band to hold the arch wire to the bracket. In addition, this slot exerts less friction on the wire than do elastic bands. Less friction means the wire can move more easily, and therefore less pressure is required to move teeth into their new position. So, EMPOWER braces tend to be more comfortable and efficient than braces that use elastic bands to hold the arch wire in place. This means that treatment is quicker with EMPOWER braces than with traditional braces, up to six months quicker.

The self-ligating brackets are oral hygiene friendly because there are no need for the elastic bands which attract plaque.

EMPOWER Clear Braces

And EMPOWER now provides clear brackets, as well. These are made out of polycrystalline alumina (PCA) and are transparent. They still employ the unique hinged design of the original EMPOWER braces and smooth rounded edges. These clear braces are more resistant to staining than brackets that use elastic bands.

Lingual Braces

Lingual braces are very similar to traditional braces except that the brackets are bonded to the back side or lingual (tongue) side of the tooth. The purpose of positioning the brackets on the back sides of the teeth is to minimize the appearance of braces. This is an excellent option for a teen or adult who does not like the look of metal braces.

The process of creating your customised lingual braces begins with making a mould or impression of your teeth. This mould is sent to the laboratory. The laboratory uses computer-aided design software to manufacture custom-fit brackets for each tooth. The brackets are made from a dental gold alloy. These brackets are then bonded to the back side of your teeth. The arch wire, which is designed and bent to your specific orthodontic requirements, is then installed.

Many patients find that there is an adjustment period with lingual braces; during the first few weeks their tongue might be sore and their speech a little slurred.

Lingual braces are an excellent solution to correct the problem of a deep overbite. They are also a good choice if you are concerned about damaging the front surface of your teeth with brackets. If you qualify for standard braces, you will most likely qualify for lingual braces.

Lingual braces may be used in combination with other braces. For example, you may choose to have lingual braces on the upper teeth and traditional braces on the lower teeth.

Partial Braces

Partial braces refer to limited orthodontic treatment focusing on just one part of the mouth. This would be appropriate for correcting problems in one area of the mouth, such as crooked or crowded teeth, or closing a gap between two teeth. Treatment time and cost is usually less than with a full set of braces.



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Which is best for me?

In order to determine which of these options is best for you and your particular orthodontic needs, an in-office consultation is required. At this consultation, we will examine your mouth, gathering data about your teeth and your bite, and we will describe these options in more detail. This is also an opportunity for you to ask questions and explain any concerns you have. Together we can choose an excellent plan for creating your new smile.

What does it cost?

Each treatment plan is individual and written estimates are given after the initial examination after an examination and records tailored to each individual patients needs.

Other details

During your treatment, you may have other questions about your braces. We are happy to answer any question you have. Here are a few common questions.

How do I keep my teeth and braces clean?

We'll provide you with a cleaning kit that is composed of a dental pick, a spiral interproximal brush, dental floss and a floss threader. These supplies can be used at school and work or while traveling as well.

What if my cheek or gum is irritated by my braces?

In addition to the special cleaning products we give you, we will also supply you with moldable wax (as well as comfort strips) that can be used to cover irritating wires or brackets. Simply adhere the wax or strip to the wire or bracket to form a protective barrier between the bracket and your cheek.

What happens if a wire or bracket breaks?

If a wire or bracket breaks, it is important that you contact us as soon as possible. We will then schedule an emergency appointment to correct the problem. This is important for keeping your treatment on schedule.

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