



THE BLOCKLEY PARTNERSHIP

Working together for your dental health

Orthodontics

Orthodontic treatment is the technique used for straightening teeth that are out of line. It can be used to close gaps and realign teeth and improve the way teeth bite together.

Why have orthodontic treatment?

Correction of the position of badly misaligned teeth is desirable to improve the appearance of your smile and the function of your bite. The optimal time for orthodontic treatment is between 11 and 16 years of age and should be started as soon as is possible. There is, however, no age restriction and there are an increasing number of adults being successfully treated.

Who does orthodontic treatment?

Although simple orthodontic treatment can be carried out by all dentists, it is more usual for patients to be referred to an orthodontist who has completed specialist training.

Assessment for orthodontic treatment

A full assessment for orthodontic treatment requires models and X rays. These clinical records are usually taken at the first visit when the patient's expectations are assessed. The full range of treatment options are then discussed with the patient, and parents if necessary.

An initial assessment can be carried out by the orthodontist when a child is between 9 and 13 years old.

How much will it cost?

The cost varies according to the patient's treatment requirements. Some treatment for children is still available on the NHS.

Braces

Tooth movements are carried out by braces which can be either fixed or removable. The fixed braces give more control over tooth movement and often obtain the best results. A removable brace can be used for simple tooth movement or, in certain circumstances, as initial treatment prior to fixed braces. Dental extraction or headgear (appliances that fit around the back of the head) are sometimes necessary to create space in the mouth to align crooked teeth and to improve the bite. When treatment is finished a "retainer" is often used to hold the teeth in their new position. The most common form of retainer is removable and will be required for at least six months after the fixed brace has been taken out, and then at night times for an indefinite period.

Finally, it is essential that you continue to attend your usual dentist for regular inspections whilst undergoing orthodontic treatment!

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