The most common orthodontic treatment is braces

Braces consist of bands, wires, and brackets. They are used to gently move teeth into the right position to fix problems with your bite.

There are different types of brackets

The most common braces have metal or plastic brackets attached to the front of the teeth. "Lingual" braces are attached to the back of teeth. They are hidden from view but harder to clean than traditional braces.

There are also removable clear aligners, or trays, that can be fitted by a dental professional. They have to be removed for eating and may not be appropriate for all patients.

Quick facts about orthodontics

- Orthodontic treatments with braces can move teeth that are crooked or do not fit together correctly
- Practicing good oral care while wearing braces helps protect your teeth and gums
- Using tools like a power toothbrush specifically designed for orthodontics, floss, or interdental brushes can help maintain proper oral health during treatment
More than just a straight smile, orthodontics can help keep your mouth healthy

Orthodontic treatments, like braces, help move teeth that are crooked or do not fit together correctly.

By fixing these problems, orthodontics can also help keep your mouth healthy. Crooked teeth can be harder to clean, putting you at risk for cavities and gum disease.

After a thorough exam, your dental professional will decide if orthodontic treatments are right for you.

**When should treatment begin?**

Your dentist will decide the best age for you to start treatment. In most cases, the best age is between 10 and 14, when a child’s head and mouth are still growing and teeth are easier to straighten. But patients can get braces at any age. In fact, more and more adults are getting braces.

**For best results, practice good oral care**

Braces create areas where pieces of food and plaque can accumulate. This can cause staining, white spots, tooth decay, and gum disease. That’s why it’s important to brush and use floss or interdental brushes as instructed by your dental professional.

How your teeth and gums look when braces are removed has a lot to do with how you treat them while the braces are on.

**Here are some tips to cut down on treatment time**

**Practice good oral care**

- Use tools designed for braces, like floss threaders, interdental brushes, and electric toothbrushes specifically designed for orthodontics
- Brush with a fluoride toothpaste and clean between teeth after meals
- Use fluoride or antibacterial oral rinse

**Protect your braces**

- Don’t chew on pens, straws, or ice cubes
- Don’t bite your nails or play with elastic bands
- Don’t eat hard or sticky foods

- Floss threaders make flossing with braces easier.