



## **When should I see an orthodontist?**

Choosing an Orthodontist and when to be treated can be difficult. The good thing about choosing an orthodontist these days is that most consultations are done at no charge. So if you aren't comfortable after the consultation for whatever reason, (inconvenient hours, location, type of treatment plan), go get a second or even a third consultation. The correct Orthodontist is out there for you.

How old should my child be before getting braces? I recommend getting a consultation for all children at 7-8 years old after getting their permanent adult incisors (4 big-top front teeth). Braces are only put on adult teeth. Not all children need to be treated at this age but some do. Examples include children that have protrusive incisors (buck teeth) which are prone to playground fractures, thumb/finger suckers (which often causes cross-bites) and children with a handful of other problems, such as crowded teeth may need to be treated early. Far too often I've encountered parents that bring their children in after all their adult teeth are in (11-12 years old). The good thing is that teeth can be straightened at any age (my oldest patient is 82!). The bad thing is that often times children who could have had their teeth straightened/bites corrected could have been done so without surgery or extractions that often times is the only solution in non growing individuals. In growing children, before bone reaches its maximum hardness/density, many devices (i.e. expanders) can be utilized to prevent otherwise needed surgeries or extractions as well as break habits such as thumb sucking or tongue thrusting.

Believe it or not braces are now considered cool and trendy. Time after time I've broken youngster's hearts by telling their parents that their child doesn't need braces. One little girl left in tears! In spite of this there are still adults who would like for their orthodontic treatment to go unnoticed. For these wanna be undercover patients we have clear braces and invisalign as options.

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