



Oxfordshire Community Dental Service

Orthodontic treatment

Contents

What is orthodontic treatment? 3

What are the benefits of orthodontic treatment? 3

What are the different types of orthodontic treatment? 4

How do I look after my teeth during treatment? 4

Are there any risks from orthodontic treatment?..... 5

Will my teeth be painful? 6

Is there a chance the treatment will not work? 6

How long does orthodontic treatment last? 6

What happens next?..... 7

Accessibility 8

Get in touch..... 8

Feedback 8

What is orthodontic treatment?

Orthodontic treatment is needed to correct the position of the teeth.

This can involve fixed or removable braces. If there is much crowding, teeth may need to be extracted to make space to straighten the teeth.

There are increasingly strict criteria for having orthodontic treatment on the NHS.

What are the benefits of orthodontic treatment?

- i** It can improve the appearance of the teeth and face.
- i** It can improve the health of the teeth and gums.
- i** Making it easier to eat and speak.
- i** It can also improve the bite, making it easier to eat.

What are the different types of orthodontic treatment?

The main forms of braces are:

Fixed appliances

These are metal brackets attached to the teeth with glue and linked together with wires.

Removable appliances

These are usually plastic plates that cover the roof of the mouth and clip on to some teeth. They carry out limited tooth movements.

Functional appliances

These are removable plastic braces that are joined together or designed to interact together.

These fit on to the upper and lower teeth. They correct the way the teeth meet (overjet = how much the teeth stick out).

How do I look after my teeth during treatment?

It is important to look after your teeth during treatment, and to be sensible about what you eat and drink.

Avoid sugary snacks, hard or chewy food. Your orthodontist will explain more.

Additional oral care is important during treatment.



Using an interdental brush and a fluoride mouthwash are recommended as well as brushing effectively for two minutes 3 times a day with a fluoride toothpaste.

If you do not keep your teeth and brace clean you may end up with permanent marks on your teeth.

It is important to continue to visit your dentist regularly throughout your orthodontic treatment to check that your teeth and gums are healthy.

Are there any risks from orthodontic treatment?

Yes - if you do not keep your teeth clean then you will get 'decalcification' permanent white marks around the braces and gum line which can lead to decay (holes in your teeth).

There are some rare risks that only affect very few people. If there is a particular risk that may affect you, your orthodontist will discuss this with you.

Will my teeth be painful?

Your teeth will probably be sore for about 3-5 days after the brace is fitted and each time the brace is adjusted.

Over the counter painkillers can help to ease the discomfort.

If your brace rubs your lips or cheeks, your orthodontist can give you wax to help this.

Is there a chance the treatment will not work?

Your orthodontic treatment should be successful if you are committed to your treatment.

You need to look after your teeth and braces. Carry on seeing your regular dentist for routine check-ups.

Attend regular adjustments, these will be within school/college hours.

How long does orthodontic treatment last?

Treatment usually takes 18-24 months with regular 20-30 minute orthodontic appointments every 6-8 weeks (approximately 20 scheduled visits).

What happens next?

When your treatment has finished, and your braces have been removed, your orthodontist will fit you with a retainer.

Retainers are designed to keep your teeth straight. It is important that you wear this as instructed by your orthodontist.

Retainers are for life.

Some patients like to continue wearing their retainers every night. Others may be able to reduce to 1 to 3 times a week at night.

You can discuss this with your orthodontist at the end of the treatment.

After the first year in retention (wearing retainers, not active braces) you will be discharged from the care of the Oxford Health orthodontist.

Any replacement retainers are made on a PRIVATE basis with your dentist. These are not available for anyone after the first year on the NHS.

Use this QR code to find all Oxfordshire Community Dental Service leaflets. You can also access them in an accessible format.



Accessibility

An accessible version of this leaflet can be found on our website: www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/cds

If you need the information in another language or format, please contact us.

Get in touch

Address	Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust Oxfordshire Community Dental Service Trust Headquarters Littlemore Mental Health Centre Sandford Road, Oxford OX4 4XN
Phone	01865 904040
Email	Oral.Health@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk
Website	www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Feedback

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides advice and support to patients, families, and carers, helping to resolve any problems, concerns, or complaints you may have.

Phone	0800 328 7971
Email	PALS@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk