

During Treatment

What to expect & treatment techniques

For most people having orthodontic treatment is very straightforward and fits seamlessly with their lifestyle after the first few days. Some tenderness can be experienced when the braces are fitted or adjusted. Occasionally, patients may suffer from soreness or rubbing of the cheeks or lips. Two or three days after fitting this usually reduces considerably - but can take one to two weeks to disappear completely in some cases. Unless you are wearing a lingual brace behind the teeth, palatal expander or removable upper brace as part of your treatment, speech is not generally affected by a conventional fixed brace.

As part of making your treatment as successful as possible, you may require one or more of the following techniques to be used to help improve the outcome of your treatment and ensure you achieve the best possible results.

Bite opening

Sometimes your orthodontist needs to add temporary pads to the chewing surface of the teeth to “prop the bite” open. These pads or props protect the brace as well as speeding up the brace treatment but can make it difficult to chew at the beginning.

Elastics and buttons

To correct the bite it may be necessary to wear elastics between the upper and lower teeth. Elastics are attached to hooks on a fixed brace or round metal or tooth-coloured buttons with Invisalign. Without elastics treatment will take longer and may be less successful. Elastics can be removed for eating and cleaning but would normally need to be in place for 22 out of 24 hours.

Interproximal Reduction (IPR)

Interproximal reduction is the gentle and planned removal of a very small amount of the outer layer of enamel from between the teeth. It can be recommended to improve the outcome of your treatment by creating space and reducing the appearance of ‘black triangles’ between the teeth where these may be a problem. The technique is carried out using fine, diamond coated strips between the teeth.

Attachments (Invisalign)

Attachments are small tooth-coloured fixings attached to the teeth in specific locations. They are made of a safe and removable dental bonding material and provide an essential ‘anchor’ to allow the plastic aligner to move the teeth as planned. Without attachments treatment with Invisalign is much less predictable and more limited in scope.

At the end of treatment the attachments are simply polished away leaving the natural tooth surface.

