



INFORMED CONSENT POTENTIAL RISKS AND LIMITATIONS OF ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT

As a rule, excellent orthodontic results can be achieved with informed and cooperative patients. Thus, the following information is routinely supplied to anyone considering orthodontic treatment in our office. The benefits of orthodontic treatment include achieving a pleasing smile and a functional bite. You should also be aware that orthodontic treatment, like any treatment of the body, has some inherent risks and limitations. These drawbacks seldom outweigh the long term benefits, but should be considered in making the decision to have orthodontic treatment.

Excellence is always our goal. The orthodontist will use his knowledge, training, skills, and experience to achieve proper function that is also esthetically pleasing; however, much depends on the patients growth pattern, genetics, oral health, and cooperation.

Throughout life, tooth positions constantly change. This is true with all individuals regardless of whether they have worn braces or not. After treatment, orthodontic patients are subject to the same subtle changes that occur in non-orthodontic patients. Orthodontic patients may notice slight irregularities develop especially in the area of the front teeth. This is particularly true if their teeth were extremely crowded prior to treatment. Continued use of a retainer may be the only way to prevent this.

Decalcifications (permanent white spots), tooth decay, or gum disease can occur if patients do not brush and floss their teeth properly. Excellent oral hygiene and daily plaque removal are essential. Sugars and between-meal-snack should be avoided. Regular check-ups with the family dentist are necessary to check for decay and to thoroughly clean the teeth. Occasionally, periodontal (gum) problems present before orthodontic treatment may worsen by the wearing of braces and require treatment by another dental specialist.

Cold sores, canker sores, irritation and/or injury to the mouth are possible while wearing braces. Allergic reactions to dental materials or medications are rare, but do occur occasionally. There may be the need for extractions of teeth, fillings, crowns, bridges, gum treatment, or other dental procedures before, during, or after orthodontic treatment. If necessary, this will be performed by another dentist.

On rare occasions the nerve of a tooth may become non-vital or abscessed. A tooth that has been irritated by a deep filling or even a minor blow may flare-up over time, with or without orthodontic treatment. A non-vital tooth may require root canal treatment and a crown by another dentist.

In some cases, the root ends of the teeth are shortened during treatment. This is called root resorption. Under healthy circumstances the shortened roots are of no disadvantage. However, in the event of gum disease, the root resorption could reduce the longevity of the affected teeth. It should be noted that root resorption can occur unrelated to orthodontic treatment.

There is also a risk that problems may occur in the temporomandibular joints (TMJ). Tooth alignment or bite correction can usually improve tooth-related causes of TMJ discomfort, but additional treatment by another dentist may be required.

Occasionally, a person who has grown normally and in average proportion may not continue to do so. If growth becomes disproportionate, the jaw position can be affected and original treatment objective may have to be compromised. Skeletal growth disharmony is a biological process beyond the orthodontist's control.

Orthodontic treatment can succeed only through the combined cooperation of all parties involved. Together, we can achieve the best possible result. In many instances, lack of cooperation with the requested use of elastics, or broken appliances will lengthen the treatment time and make successful completion of treatment impossible. Because most of our patients are of school age, it is essential that some appointments be scheduled during school hours.

We appreciate your confidence in selection our office. We want you to be fully informed, so feel free to ask questions at any time. During the period of orthodontic treatment, we will make models, x-rays, and photographs which may be used for professional reference and display, orthodontic journals, books, meetings, and/or patient education.

I have read and understand this form and consent to treatment for _____

Signature _____ Date _____ Relationship _____