



**Penn**  
Dental Medicine

## **Affordable Orthodontics at Penn Dental Medicine: There's An Option for Everyone!**

**An Informative Brochure Prepared by Penn Dental Medicine**



# The Orthodontic Experience You've Always Wanted

It may seem as though achieving your dream smile requires making significant sacrifices.

Fortunately, Penn Dental Medicine is committed to leaving a positive mark by offering the best of all worlds: **orthodontic excellence, an option for everyone, a comfortable experience, and an affordable treatment plan.**

At Penn Dental Medicine, we genuinely believe that every patient should have a comfortable, affordable, quality orthodontic experience.

Everyone deserves to feel confident about themselves and their smile. Pursuing orthodontic treatment should not be avoided because of financial concerns. **Avoiding treatment today can lead to significant complications tomorrow.** Penn Dental Medicine wants to help you and your family avoid these issues through affordable, quality orthodontic care.



Below, you'll learn about which treatment options we offer and the different factors that play into making your treatment decision. **Everyone's situation is different, which is why orthodontic treatment should address the specific needs of each individual.**

While this eBook is designed to educate you about our various treatment options, an individual consultation is necessary to determine which option would be best for you or your family member. Penn Dental Medicine offers treatment with both traditional braces and aligners, such as Invisalign.

# Traditional Braces: A Reliable, Affordable Option

## What Do Braces Fix?

Traditional orthodontics or modern "dental braces" have been around since the mid-19th century to treat a variety of alignment problems. These include:

- **Spacing and crookedness:** A host of issues may develop for a person with crooked or improperly spaced teeth (both overcrowded teeth and wide spacing). Certain teeth may protrude, causing the teeth to rub against one another, taking a heavy toll on your teeth over time. By thinning the enamel, such rubbing causes the teeth to age prematurely. Not only that, but the uneven surfaces make teeth harder to keep clean, increasing one's likelihood of other dental problems such as gum disease and cavities. If you clean your teeth diligently and continue to have bad breath, this may indicate that your crooked teeth or improper spacing may already be having a negative effect on your dental health.
- **Malocclusion (overbite/underbite):** Malocclusion refers to disproportion in your jaw size. When the upper jaw is larger, it means you have an overbite, while a larger lower jaw is called an underbite. As with crooked or wrongly spaced teeth, this leads to increased wear on enamel and the accompanying problems. A misaligned bite may also cause teeth to shift over time.







These two categories encompass almost every possible orthodontic problem, including open bite, crossbite, widely spaced teeth, and protrusion, among others.

## How Do Braces Work?

Metal braces are used to align the jaw and straighten teeth. They may be used to fix gaps and shape the teeth and jaws. Metal braces have evolved over the years to be lighter weight and more structurally accommodating. Made of a high-grade stainless steel, they are attached to each tooth, and with the help of the brackets, slowly shift teeth into the correct positions. Brackets are linked to each other by a thin archwire, which in turn is connected by tiny elastics called ligatures. Ligatures are changed at each appointment when the braces are tightened by an orthodontist.

## Why Patients Choose Braces

People choose metal braces because they're a tried-and-true option that can be more affordable. Braces are strong and rarely break. You also don't have to worry about the risk of misplacing them, because they are attached to your teeth. The dietary restrictions required for



treatment (such as the avoidance of sugary, sticky foods) may increase the likelihood of weight loss. By avoiding these unhealthy food options, you may find that your overall dietary habits improve throughout treatment.

# Invisalign: Invisible Orthodontics that Fit Into Your Life

## What is Invisalign?

Invisalign treatment consists of clear plastic aligners that can be inserted into your mouth and removed at will. They are custom-made in our laboratory to fit the unique shape of your mouth. They work to straighten teeth using a series of trays that shift your teeth into position. Every one to two weeks, you receive a new set, which slowly moves your teeth into the correct alignment. The teeth typically move about .25 mm per tray. Thermoplastic design controls the force used to straighten teeth as well as the timing of its application.

After your consultation, the orthodontist performs a digital scan to create a three dimensional image of your teeth. These images are used to develop a customized treatment plan that maps out the movement of your teeth. The process should take 12 months if you follow your dentist's instructions about wearing them at least 20-22 hours daily.



## Why Do Patients Love Invisalign?

The most obvious reason why patients choose Invisalign is that it offers a discreet option for straightening teeth. Teenagers who are self-conscious and adults who don't want to draw attention at work often opt for Invisalign.

Another reason why Invisalign is sometimes preferred over braces is that it allows people to carry on their normal lives uninterrupted. You can eat the food you love throughout the process because aligners can be removed during eating and brushing. Patients who play contact sports may also appreciate Invisalign because it is not necessary to wear a special mouthguard, as is recommended with traditional braces.

Invisalign has become popular because of the comfort and convenience of treatment. Patients may prefer the mouth feel of the plastic aligners to traditional metal braces. Because of the lack of adjustments, Invisalign patients require less frequent follow ups with their orthodontist.

## Issues to Consider When Choosing Between Braces and Invisalign

Orthodontic treatment is a big commitment regardless of which treatment method you choose. There are pros and cons to every treatment option, and as a patient, you deserve to know what you're committing yourself to. That's why we've compiled a list of things that patients say they wish they had known ahead of committing to treatment. Not every patient experiences all of these, but it's useful to get honest feedback from previous patients.







- **Invisalign** may cause a lisp. Some patients may find this very noticeable and others don't have any problems at all. This tends to improve as you get used to having the aligners in your mouth.
- **Braces** can be somewhat irritating to patients' gums. It may also be difficult to keep your gums clean during treatment, so it's important to follow your dentist's instructions on proper oral hygiene and keep your regular appointments. Otherwise, you may need additional attention for gum disease after treatment.
- **Invisalign** is painful for some people. Patients often imagine that because Invisalign is plastic and not metal, there is no possibility of experiencing pain during treatment. This may be true for some people, but others have reported pain from the edges of their aligners rubbing against their gums. You can apply wax to cover the tougher edges on your aligners, and if that doesn't work, your dentist can file down the sharp edges for you.
- **Braces** may be frustrating for people who are very attached to certain foods that they are advised to avoid. For some, this aspect can be so problematic that it interferes with treatment. Eating hard foods may dislodge or otherwise break part of your braces, necessitating a trip to the orthodontist for emergency repair.



- **Invisalign** can affect your lifestyle because, though you can keep eating your favorite foods, you may have to eat and drink more quickly. You can only drink water when your aligners are in your mouth. Patients have reported feeling rushed when eating and miss being able to slowly sip a cup of coffee or tea. For treatment to be complete within the expected timeframe, aligners must remain in your mouth for 20-22 hours daily. This requirement can cut into the time you normally spend eating or drinking.



## Why Choose PDM for Orthodontic Treatment

Penn Dental Medicine is happy to inform patients of what they need to expect with different orthodontics treatments. When you meet with your Penn resident orthodontist and their supervising faculty member, you can expect to learn the pros and cons of each option and receive a personalized plan. No course of treatment is absolutely perfect, but there are benefits to both braces and Invisalign. When you decide it's time to get orthodontic treatment, you'll have





to make two important decisions: which option is best for you, and where to go for your care.

We hope you'll consider Penn Dental Medicine for your orthodontic provider. Our patients trust the Penn name and the quality of the residents and faculty at our clinic. Because we operate as the teaching clinic of the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine's Orthodontic Residency Program, we have access to state-of-the-art technology that ensures effective, precise orthodontics treatment. As a teaching clinic, we are able to provide patients with financial concerns affordable treatment rates for both traditional orthodontic treatment and Invisalign. This makes treatment possible for families who otherwise may initially weary of making this investment.

If you're ready for care that's affordable, high-quality, and comfortable, then give Penn Dental Medicine a call **215-898-8965**. One of our representatives will assist you in the scheduling process, and set on the path to a happy and healthy smile.

