



# TWIGGE ORTHODONTICS

## ORTHODONTIC BENEFITS AND RISKS

Dear Client

It is important to know that there are benefits and risks associated with orthodontic treatment. Most of the risks are general risks that apply to all orthodontic patients. There are a few specific risks that may not apply to you. Dr. Twigge will highlight the risks specific to your treatment.

### **BENEFITS**

Orthodontic treatment may improve:

1. The way your teeth bite together. This could reduce tooth wear, soft-tissue trauma and jaw joint dysfunction.
2. The appearance of your teeth when you smile. This may have a positive impact on your general self-esteem, your dental confidence and your socially life.
3. The alignment of your teeth. Having straighter teeth may make it easier to brush your teeth properly and perhaps reduce the risk of developing decay, gingivitis and tooth wear.

### **RISKS**

#### **PAIN AND DISCOMFORT**

It is normal for teeth to feel tender a few hours after you had your braces fitted and when your braces get adjusted. This will last for a few days to a week. The discomfort varies from person to person and will depend on your pain threshold and different types of treatments. You will not lose any sleep; however, you may need take pain medication if permitted/required, such as paracetamol. This initial tenderness is due to the newly applied pressures on your teeth which slowly push/pull your teeth into alignment.

#### **ULCERATION**

It is common for your braces to irritate your lips and cheeks when your braces are fitted. The irritation lasts for a few days until your mouth gets used to the shape of your braces. In addition, loose or broken appliances may scratch or irritate your lips, gums or cheeks. Orthodontic wax may be helpful to alleviate the irritation.

#### **ENAMEL DECALCIFICATION LESIONS AND TOOTH DECAY**

Enamel decalcification lesions are white or brown spots around orthodontic brackets due to the loss of enamel mineral integrity. Enamel decalcifications are a step closer towards cavities and in most cases irreversible. Enamel decalcification lesions and tooth decay/cavities are the result of poor oral hygiene or the ineffective removal of plaque around your brackets over time. Your diet also plays a significant role. Prevention is always better than cure. Therefore, avoid sugary foods and drinks, brush your teeth twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste and consider rinsing your mouth daily with a fluoride mouthwash.

#### **ROOT RESORPTION/ ROOT SHORTENING**

Some tooth roots may become shorter during orthodontic treatment. This is called root resorption or root shortening. Patients are unaware of this and in most cases the root shortening has no significant consequences. It is nearly impossible to predict who will be affected; however, some people are more prone to it than others. On vary rare occasions the root shortening can impact on the longevity of the tooth/teeth and treatment may need to be discontinued.

#### **NON-VITALITY OF TEETH**

Some teeth may become non-vital during orthodontic treatment. This mostly affects teeth that had trauma, significant decay and deep fillings. Whilst very rare, this can lead to discolouration of teeth and the need for root canal treatments.

#### **TOOTH FUSION TO BONE (ANKYLOSIS)**

Very rarely, some teeth may become fused to bone. This may be due to trauma or eruption disturbances. This can complicate your orthodontic treatment.

## PERIODONTAL HEALTH

Braces will make tooth brushing significantly harder and plaque will adhere to your teeth much quicker. Poor oral hygiene can lead to inflamed and puffy gums (gingivitis) and gum infections which can slow down tooth movement. In some cases, gum infections can cause irreversible damage to the tissues which support your teeth. In general, the periodontium includes your gums, the bone around your tooth roots and all the tooth supporting structures. Many factors can influence your periodontal health such as: medical conditions, genetic predisposition, smoking, tooth alignment and bite, habits, oral hygiene and diet (just to name a few).

## POOR RETAINER WEAR

You will be issued retainers after the active orthodontic phase of your treatment. It is your responsibility to wear the retainers and self-discipline is required. Poor co-operation with retainer wear may result in unfavourable tooth movement/relapse.

## POOR COMPLIANCE

It takes hard work to get a good orthodontic result. Patients are required to maintain excellent oral hygiene and wear elastics to support their orthodontic treatment. The better you help with your treatment, the faster and more predictable is the result. It is a team effort!

## ATYPICAL GROWTH

Vary rarely, some patients have jaw growth that is more than what was expected. This atypical growth makes it harder to make the teeth fit together and your orthodontist may not be able to achieve the desired result. Treatment can take longer and occasionally a jaw operation may be required.

## TREATMENT TIME

Orthodontic treatment takes 15-24 months for most cases. Occasionally, treatment may be longer depending on the complexity of the case or due to complications. Common things that prolong treatment are: poor brushing, poor compliance, breakages and not attending each appointment.

## RESTORATIVE CARE

Some patients may require restorative care for different reasons after their orthodontic treatment. Orthodontic treatment does not include extractions, fillings, implants, root canal treatment, gum treatment, periodontal procedures, teeth whitening, crowns or bridges, radiographs, consultations with other dental or medical practitioners, removal of wisdom teeth and jaw surgeries. We recommend that you consult with your dentist or dental specialist to understand the treatment planned and the costs involved prior to commencing orthodontic treatment. Remember that some treatments may have ongoing maintenance and costs.

It is important that you attend all your orthodontic appointments so that Dr. Twigge can screen for orthodontic side-effects.

It is also important to have regular check-ups and cleans with your regular dentist.

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