

Your Child's First Orthodontic Check-up

No Later Than Age 7



Good Dental Health Starts Early

As a parent, you want the best for your child. That includes healthy teeth and a pleasing smile.

Start with regular dental care. The American Dental Association recommends that a child visit the family dentist by his or her first birthday, while baby (primary) teeth are emerging. Your dentist can alert you to any concerns about how the teeth and jaws are developing.

All Kids Should Get an Orthodontic Check-Up No Later Than Age 7

To have a smile that's good for life, your child needs teeth and jaws that are properly aligned — in other words, a healthy bite. The American Association of Orthodontists recommends that your child get an orthodontic check-up no later than age 7. By then, your child's teeth have developed enough to where subtle problems can be spotted with jaw growth and emerging teeth.



A Lifetime of Benefits

Choosing the Optimal Time for Treatment

While orthodontic treatment most often begins between the ages of 9 and 14, some orthodontic problems are easier to correct if they're treated early. If it appears that treatment will be needed, your orthodontist can advise you as to the ideal time to begin. This gives your orthodontist the best chance to:

- + Guide jaw growth
- + Lower the risk of trauma to protruded front teeth
- + Correct harmful oral habits
- + Improve appearance and self-esteem
- + Guide permanent teeth into a more favorable position
- + Improve the way lips meet



Orthodontists Can Spot Subtle Problems

Signs the Bite's Not Right

It's not always easy to tell when your child has an orthodontic problem. Even teeth that look straight may be hiding a problem bite. Here are some clues that may indicate the need for orthodontic attention:



- + Early or late loss of baby teeth
- + Difficulty in chewing or biting
- + Breathing through the mouth
- + Thumb-sucking
- + Crowded, misplaced or blocked-out teeth
- + Jaws that are too far forward or back
- + Biting the cheek or biting into the roof of the mouth
- + Protruding teeth
- + Upper and lower teeth that don't meet, or meet in an abnormal way
- + An unbalanced facial appearance
- + Grinding or clenching of the teeth

About Orthodontists

Orthodontists are dental specialists who diagnose, prevent and treat dental and facial irregularities. They receive an additional two to three years of specialized education beyond dental school to learn the proper way to align and straighten teeth.

Give Your Child the Gift of a Healthy Smile

Not only do well-aligned teeth look good and feel good, they also are important to good dental health. Poorly aligned teeth can lead to tooth decay, gum disease and other dental problems. Not everyone needs orthodontic treatment. But if your child does need help, it pays to start treatment when you have the greatest chance for success. Make sure your child receives an orthodontic check-up no later than age 7.



Orthodontists help people achieve healthy, beautiful smiles.

Your orthodontist, a member of the American Association of Orthodontists, sincerely thanks you for placing your confidence in him/her to treat your orthodontic needs. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult your orthodontist.

Orthodontists receive an additional two to three years of specialized education beyond dental school to learn the proper way to align and straighten teeth. Only those with this education may call themselves “orthodontists,” and only orthodontists are eligible for membership in the American Association of Orthodontists.

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American Association of
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