

LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT AGREEMENT

Orthodontic treatment is not an exact science. Like any treatment of the body, much of its success depends on the understanding and cooperation of patients. While recognizing the benefits of a pleasing smile and healthy functional teeth, you should also be aware that orthodontic treatment, like any treatment of the body, has some hazards, inconveniences, and limitations. These drawbacks seldom outweigh the long-range benefits, but should be considered in making the decision to wear orthodontic appliances.

The following information is routinely supplied to anyone considering orthodontic treatment in our office. Please read through this form carefully and ask the orthodontist/staff to explain anything you do not understand. Clarify what is expected of you as a patient, or as a parent of a young patient, to achieve excellent results.

Perfection is always our goal. The Orthodontist will use his/her knowledge, training, skill and experience (three extra years of orthodontic specialty training are required by the American Dental Association before one can be called an orthodontist) to achieve perfect function that is also aesthetically pleasing. Much depends on the patient's growth patterns, genetics, oral health, and cooperation.

Throughout life, tooth positions are constantly changing. This is true with all individuals regardless of whether they have worn braces or not. After orthodontic treatment, patients are subject to the same subtle changes that occur in non-orthodontic patients. In the late teens and early twenties, orthodontic patients may notice slight irregularities developing in their front teeth. This is particularly true if their teeth were extremely crowded prior to treatment.

Prolonged wearing of retainers may be the only way to prevent this if it becomes undesirable.

Orthodontic appliances do not cause cavities. They may trap food particles and increase the likelihood of a patient developing cavities or decalcification marks. Decalcification (permanent marking on the teeth), tooth decay, or gum disease can occur if patients do not brush and floss their teeth properly and thoroughly. Patients are able to prevent these problems with a combination of proper diet, good tooth brushing habits, and regular checkups with the family dentist. Sugars and between-meal snacks should be eliminated. Occasionally, periodontal (gum) problems present before orthodontic treatment may be worsened by the wearing of braces and may require treatment by another specialist.

Cold sores, canker sores, and irritations or injury to the mouth are possible while wearing braces. Loose or broken wires and bands can also scratch or irritate your cheeks, gums, or lips. Your orthodontist will give you soft wax to cover problem areas like this. Also allergic reactions to dental materials or medications are rare, but do occur occasionally.

Teeth must sometimes be extracted as part of the orthodontic procedure. Your orthodontist will recommend removal only if it improves your prospects for successful treatment. There may be a need for fillings, crowns, bridges, gum treatment or other dental procedures before, during, or after orthodontic treatment. On rare occasions the nerve of a tooth may become abscessed. A tooth that has been irritated by a deep filling or even a minor blow may require treatment by another dentist.

In some instances, the root ends are shortened during treatment. This process is called root resorption. Under healthy circumstances, the shortened roots are no disadvantage. There are rare circumstances that may lead to loss of teeth due to root resorption. There is no way to foresee whether this will happen and nothing can be done to prevent this from occurring.

There is also a very small chance that pain may occur in the lower jaw joints, i.e. temporomandibular. Tooth alignment or bite correction can usually improve tooth-related causes of jaw 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 the growth becomes disproportioned, the jaw position can be affected and original treatment objectives may have to be compromised. Skeletal growth disharmony is a biological process beyond the Orthodontist's control. This disharmony may necessitate surgical correction in conjunction with orthodontic treatment.

Orthodontic treatment can only be successful if all parties are willing and able to cooperate by wearing headgear, elastics, and retainers as instructed. Otherwise the length of treatment may be extended or the results may be compromised.

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

I have read and understand the letter of information and with this knowledge, consent to treatment for: _____

There is no financial obligation until active treatment is initiated.

Signature: _____ Orthodontist

Relationship to Patient: _____