

Dental Health



Answers To Questions That Adults Have About Orthodontic Treatment

(NAPSA)—In the ever-evolving practice of orthodontics, two trends stand out above the rest—more adults are seeking treatment, and they have more options than ever before. According to a survey by the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO)—which represents more than 17,000 orthodontists throughout the U.S., Canada and abroad—more than 20 percent of current orthodontic patients are adults. That's well over 1 million people learning that a healthy, beautiful smile is possible at any age. But while the ease, availability and options for orthodontic treatment have never been greater for adults, it can be overwhelming for them to sort through their choices. The solution? The AAO recommends seeking counsel from an orthodontic specialist to cut through the hearsay and become an informed, proactive patient.

To help those considering treatment, the experts in orthodontic treatment provided the tips below.

Five questions to ask to be an informed patient:

How do I find a qualified orthodontic specialist near me?

- AAO's website, www.MyLifeMySmile.org, has a helpful module that locates orthodontists by street address, city, state and/or zip/postal code. Visitors can also take advantage of the site's "Frequently Asked Questions" and "Ask an Orthodontist" sections to get answers from a specialist.

Which treatment option is right for my lifestyle?

- Each case is unique, but many treatments fit an adult lifestyle. Some orthodontists offer lingual braces, which feature brackets bonded behind the teeth; ceramic braces, which blend with



With all the newer options available to orthodontic patients, more and more adults are seeking treatment.

the color of the tooth to lessen visibility; or a series of invisible aligner trays (clear aligners) to correct certain problems.

Which treatment plan will give me the fastest and most permanent results?

- Very often, adult patients have already made up their minds as to which treatment options they'd like to pursue. It is important to ask an orthodontist if the selected treatment will achieve the desired results.

How can I afford treatment?

- Orthodontic treatment is more affordable than ever because orthodontists offer a variety of payment plans and options. Insurance may cover adult orthodontic treatment, and 60 percent of all new patients in 2010 had dental insurance that included orthodontic benefits.

I'm always busy—will orthodontic treatment fit into my lifestyle?

- New technology = less frequent visits. On average, orthodontists see patients only once every six weeks and complete treatment in 22 months.