

## **Orthodontic Treatment**

It's never too late to have a beautiful smile

### **Why Braces?**

There are many benefits of having healthy teeth and proper jaw alignment. Crooked and crowded teeth are hard to clean and maintain. This can result in tooth decay, worsen gum disease and lead to tooth loss. Other orthodontic problems can contribute to abnormal wear of tooth surfaces, inefficient chewing function, excessive stress on gum tissue and the bone that supports the teeth, or misalignment of the jaw joints. These can lead to chronic headaches and face or neck pain. Orthodontic treatment can be less costly than the additional care required to treat dental problems arising as a result of orthodontic problems. For most people, a beautiful smile is the most obvious benefit of orthodontics. After your braces come off, you'll feel more confident about your smile and your overall dental health.

### **Braces for All Ages**

#### *Adults*

Orthodontic treatment can be successful at any age, and adults especially appreciate the benefits of a beautiful smile. According to recent studies, one of every five patients in orthodontic treatment is over 21 years old. Jaw surgery is more often required for adult orthodontic patients because their jaws are no longer growing. Adults also may have experienced some breakdown or loss of their teeth and bone that supports the teeth and may require periodontal treatment before, during and/or after orthodontic treatment. Bone loss can also limit the amount and direction of tooth movement that is advisable.

#### *Kids*

The first permanent molars and incisors have usually come in between the age of 7 – 9 and by this time crossbites, crowding and other problems can be evaluated. When orthodontic treatment begins early, the growth of the jaw and incoming permanent teeth can be guided relatively easily. Early treatment can also regulate the width of the upper and lower dental arches, gain space for permanent teeth, avoid the need for permanent tooth extractions, reduce likelihood of impacted permanent teeth, correct thumb-sucking, and eliminate abnormal swallowing or speech problems. In other words, early treatment can simplify later treatment.