

# Orthodontics. Beyond the miraculous rubber bands

Ever since Orthodontics became known as a dental specialty, a few of the aspects that have always been at the heart and the success of its approach were the efficacy of the treatment, its evolution and the time required.

Orthodontics has developed hugely with the development of new techniques and systems that offer more and more treatment options. Nowadays, we have an immense variety of removable and fixed, metallic or aesthetic, visible or invisible devices. The goal is always to find the most aesthetic, efficient and comfortable solutions for the patient.

The development of self-ligating brackets, namely the Damon System®, has brought many advantages to orthodontic treatment, using less force, as the system reduces friction to the minimum. As such, the movement of the teeth is easier and faster, offering patients more comfort and fewer consultations.

Self-ligating systems often allow the Orthodontist to solve situa-

tions without having to resort to teeth extraction.

Self-ligating brackets do not need the famous “coloured elastics”, which despite being attractive to the younger generation, have two basic disadvantages: they lose elasticity easily and therefore need to be substituted more often, resulting in the need for additional consultations and a longer treatment time and they accumulate more plaque and bacteria, making oral hygiene more difficult and precipitating gum problems.

The search for more aesthetic braces led to ceramic brackets, lingual braces (placed on the inside part of the tooth) and “invisible” braces, such as Invisalign®.

**Invisalign®** is an orthodontic treatment that straightens the teeth through a series of removable and

practically invisible aligners made to measure, through 3D computerised technology.

Due to a series of aligners, teeth are shifted gradually and more comfortably for the patient. The aligners should only be removed for eating and cleaning purposes. Substantial advantages are obtained: Easier to eat, easier to maintain a correct mouth hygiene, feel freer.

With so many options currently available, successful orthodontic treatment is possible, even for adults, improving the aesthetics, health and function of the teeth, resulting in a better and complete rehabilitation.

The first visit to the Orthodontist should be at approximately 6 or 7 years of age, as certain problems are easier and faster to correct at



an earlier age. However, there are quite a few problems in adult patients that could also benefit from Orthodontic treatment, such as:

- Gum problems, due to difficulty in maintaining a correct hygiene often caused by the incorrect position of the teeth;
- Loss of teeth, causing adjacent teeth to move, resulting in difficult placement of implants and aesthetic results;
- Excessive and asymmetric dental erosion due to the incorrect

position of the teeth and/or jaw;

- Problems with articulation of the jaw can be associated with incorrect dental and/or position of the jaw which can be corrected and the problem solved this way.

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