



CityOrthodontics
& PediatricDentistry

How to Find the Right Orthodontist for Your Child





HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT ORTHODONTIST FOR YOUR CHILD

Your child's health is your top priority. Good dental health plays a big role in your kid's overall well-being. Poor oral health not only leads to gum disease and cavities, but it's also linked to developmental and behavioural problems in children.

While good oral hygiene is a life-long concern, prioritizing it early on is key to get your child on the right track. You know regular dental visits are key to maintaining oral health, but do you know how important it is to see an orthodontist?

Think your child doesn't need to see an orthodontist because they are not experiencing any problems? Now's actually the best time to make that appointment! [The Canadian Association of Orthodontists](#) recommends children first visit the orthodontist by seven years of age. By this time, their first permanent molars and incisors have usually come in. This doesn't mean your child will need braces, but if treatment is required, it's best to know early on.

How can you find the right orthodontist? Find out what questions to ask when considering different clinics and learn about the services you should expect from an orthodontist.

DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOUR CHILD NEEDS BRACES OR INVSIALIGN

You want your child to have healthy, beautiful teeth and be confident in their smile as they grow up. That's exactly why you shouldn't wait until it's obvious your kid needs braces to see an orthodontist.

It's best to be proactive and start evaluating treatment options before treatment is needed. When the orthodontist sees your child from a young age, they can prevent or reduce the need for more invasive treatment in the future. The best-case scenario is you find out your child's teeth development is on the right track. The orthodontist will then continue to monitor their oral development without any intervention or cost.

If treatment is needed, the orthodontist will be able to catch potentially severe problems early on. Early evaluations make any future treatments easier and shorter, saving you time and money in the long run. Also, it has been proven by scientific studies that early orthodontic treatment can reduce the chance of trauma to prominent front teeth, the need for jaw surgery, and the need for long term treatment.





ASK FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Ask your child's pediatrician for an orthodontist recommendation. Remember—your child is not alone in their need for orthodontic care. Some of their friends likely already have braces, as many children need to see an orthodontist to achieve healthy, properly aligned teeth. Ask other parents what orthodontist they see, and check if your neighbours, coworkers, and friends have any recommendations.

VISIT THE CLINIC

Visit the orthodontist office in person to determine whether it's the right choice for you and your child. Most practices would be happy to give you a tour and explain the services they offer in person during a consultation.

Here are some important factors to consider when visiting clinics.

ATMOSPHERE

Everyone from the receptionist to the orthodontist should be friendly and approachable. This contributes to a warm atmosphere that will make future appointments as stress-free as possible for your child. Consider the overall ambience at the office. If you feel even slightly uncomfortable, your child is likely feeling that way too.

Is the office appropriately set up for children, teenagers, and young adults? The traditional dental office environment doesn't work so well for kids. Rather than just being professional, an orthodontist's office should be fun and inviting. Books, toys, games, and kid-sized furniture should be set up in the waiting room. If they've got the right stuff, your child might even be excited about future appointments. Plus, they'll feel more at ease with other children around.

LOCATION

Is the office conveniently located? Once you choose an orthodontist, you'll be visiting that office for years to come. Especially if your child will have regular appointments, you'll want to choose a location that's close to your work, home, or your child's school. The more convenient it is, the easier the whole experience will be.



QUALIFICATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

After graduating from an accredited dental school, orthodontists enroll in a specialty program that provides additional training and specialization in orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics. In order to be licensed and recognized as orthodontists in your province, these specialists must pass vigorous examinations at the Royal College of Dentists of Canada (RCDC).

Orthodontists deal primarily with the diagnosis, prevention, and correction of malpositioned teeth and jaws. However, the specialty covers a wide range of proactive and reactive treatments, including but not limited to:

- Jaw growth
- Jaw modification
- Jaw alignment
- Orthodontic preparation for jaw surgery
- Facial growth
- Dental development
- Teeth alignment techniques

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE GETTING STARTED

DO YOU OFFER EMERGENCY CARE?

You can never be overly prepared when it comes to your kids. How does the orthodontics office handle emergencies? You can't control when emergencies occur, so ask about their after-hour availability.

DO YOU ACCEPT MY DENTAL INSURANCE?

If you have a dental plan, check to see if you need to choose your orthodontist from a list of participating clinics. Find out if you need to pay after each visit or whether the orthodontist will file a claim with your insurance company and bill you the balance.

WHAT FINANCING OPTIONS DO YOU OFFER?

The cost of your child's orthodontic treatment will depend on their needs and treatment plan. But you'll want to learn about the available financing options so you can budget in advance. Find out if the office offers direct billing and no interest financing options, which will make your life easier.



WHAT KIND OF CARE CAN YOU EXPECT?

During your child's first appointment, the orthodontist should perform an oral exam and assess your child's tooth development. The orthodontist will let you know if your child currently requires or will eventually need orthodontics to straighten their teeth or correct an improper bite.

The orthodontist will also give you tips and strategies to deal with any problematic dental habits your child has. It's important that they educate you and your child on proper dental care at home in a way that's easy for your child to understand. If your child does need treatment, the orthodontist will teach you both how to care for the appliances.

Visiting the orthodontist, whether or not treatment is needed, shouldn't be a stressful event. A good orthodontist will walk you through every step and answer every question you and your child have along the way.

BEFORE AND AFTER CASES

OVERBITE



CROWDING



OPEN BITE



SPACING





THE CITY OF SMILES



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