

Is My Kid Going to Need Braces?



When you hear the word “braces,” your first reaction might be to run! From cost and maintenance to time consuming office visits, putting your child through orthodontic treatment can seem daunting. Fear not! Today’s treatment isn’t the headache you remember from childhood braces. As a practicing orthodontist in Toronto, every day parents ask me questions such as does my child **need** braces, when should they get them, and how much does treatment cost. To ensure you head into your child’s next orthodontic appointment prepared, below is how I address the top five most frequently asked orthodontic treatment questions.

1. How common are braces among kids these days?

Braces are very common among children. I would estimate that 60 per cent of children between 10 and 13 years old have had some type of retainer and/or braces. In fact, the American Association of Orthodontists recommends that kids have their first orthodontic consultation around the age 7.

2. How will I know if my child needs braces and when?

Here’s my advice: there is no “one age” that children get braces. Just remember, orthodontic treatment is not a one-size fits all process. The best way to find out if your child needs braces is to seek the advice of a local orthodontist. I’ve discovered that many of my patients have found my practice through the [Damon Doctor Locator](#) which is an online search portal that pinpoints experts within miles of your zip code.

3. Can bad habits as a child such as sucking on your thumb lead to needing braces as a teen?

In most cases, yes! Such habits can cause misaligned jaws and teeth which need to be corrected prior to all the permanent teeth erupting into the mouth. As a general rule, the longer, more intense the habit, the longer the correction may be afterwards.

4. What can my child and I expect when it comes to caring for braces?

Maintenance and upkeep is key to a successful treatment process! My advice to patients is to brush twice a day for two minutes and avoid hard, sticky, sugary foods. Additionally, visit your dentist on a regular basis. In my practice we use an advanced system of braces called **Damon(TM) Smile** which are easier to clean and more hygienic, as they don't require elastic rubber bands that can more easily trap food.

5. What are some new treatment technologies out there for children in need of braces?

Back in my day, I had headgear and teeth removed in order to correct my bite. Trust me, things have changed! Damon Smile braces have special doors on them that open and close allowing the wire to easily slide through the bracket. This treatment system helps the teeth move more gently and quickly without elastics bands that need to be tightened and stretched on each tooth.

Dr. Brenda Chekay is a Damon Smile provider serving the greater Toronto area. To learn more about Dr. Chekay and her practice, Uptown Orthodontics, please visit uptownortho.com

<http://www.ivillage.ca/health/diet/my-kid-going-to-need-braces>