

# 7

## QUESTIONS TO KNOW IF YOUR CHILD REALLY NEEDS BRACES?

# INTRODUCTION



Hi am Dr. Marianela Cardenas, I meet hundreds of moms and dads every week who have many questions about getting braces for their kids. They often wonder whether they really need them, at what age they should get them, who they should see for their treatment, how long will it take, etc.

I have put together this special report to help parents just like yourself answer some of these common questions and be able to give your son or daughter a perfect smile for a lifetime.



# 1 HOW SOON CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD NEEDS BRACES?



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This is one of the most common questions I receive on a daily basis and one of the most important for parents to know. While most kids will receive braces when they get all their permanent teeth (around 10-12 years old), there are many kids that will benefit from treatment earlier. The American Association of Orthodontists recommends that all children receive an evaluation by an orthodontist no later than the age of 7.

At the age of 7, an orthodontist can start seeing problems develop that might affect your child in the future. Catching these problems early can help you avoid more complex treatments such as extractions of teeth or surgery in the future. It may also reduce the amount of time your child will need to be in braces.

The best way to know if your child needs braces is to have an evaluation by an orthodontist. They will be able to tell you if your child is ready for braces or help you determine the best time to get started.



# 2

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SIGNS THAT INDICATE MY CHILD NEEDS EARLY TREATMENT?

These are some of the signs to watch out for in your child that might indicate they need early interceptive treatment:

- **Finger sucking habits**
- **Rossbites**
- **Difficulty biting or chewing**
- **Esthetic problems that might affect your child's self-esteem**
- **Speech problems**
- **Teeth that stick out too much (buck teeth)**
- **Snoring**
- **Breathing problems**
- **Shifting of the jaws**
- **Crowded teeth**
- **Early or late loss of teeth**

While some of these problems can sometimes be obvious to parents, there are others that only your orthodontist might be able to detect. The best way to determine if your child will need early treatment it to have an orthodontic evaluation by age 7.

# 3

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF EARLY TREATMENT?




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For kids that need early interceptive treatment, the benefits can be huge. Some of these include:

- Correct improper jaw growth
- Guide jaws into their correct position
- Fix harmful habits such as thumb sucking
- Improve appearance and self esteem
- Lower risk of trauma to teeth that stick out too much

- Eliminate speech problems
- Prevent lengthier and more invasive future treatment

While only a minority of patients will actually need early treatment or intervention, it is always better to be safe than sorry. Identifying potential problems early can help you and your child avoid more involved treatment in the future, saving you time, money and headaches later on.



# 4 WHAT IF MY CHILD IS NOT READY FOR BRACES?

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The fact is: only about 10% of kids will need early interceptive treatment. While it is very important for these kids to receive early treatment, most kids will not be ready for braces at the age of 7.

Most orthodontist have recall programs where they perform periodic evaluations every 6-12 months to monitor how your child is growing and when is the best time to start braces. These are usually provided free of charge. If your child is not ready for braces, your orthodontist might recommend for your child to be placed in this program.

Determining the best time to start treatment is very important for both you and your orthodontist. Starting at the right time can save you time and money in braces, and it can make treatment as simple as possible, minimizing the chances of gum disease, cavities, tooth sensitivity, and many other problems that arise from lengthy treatment.



# 5 WHO SHOULD I SEE FOR MY CHILD'S TREATMENT?



The answer is simple: an orthodontist!

An Orthodontist is a dentist who specializes in straightening teeth and making healthy bites. The name of the specialty is actually Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics.

Orthodontics means straightening teeth, while Dentofacial Orthopedics deals with guiding jaw growth and other habits in growing children.

After becoming dentists, Orthodontists go through 2-3 years of additional education at an accredited Orthodontic Program to become Orthodontists.

Orthodontists not only deal with

straightening teeth, but also make sure your teeth, jaws, gums and muscles work in balance to have both a healthy bite and an esthetic smile. While general dentists are allowed to place braces, education in dental school is very limited in Orthodontics. That is why Orthodontist go through additional training to become specialists in their area, and braces is all they do in their practices. In the same way that you trust your heart to a cardiologist, when it comes to straightening your smile, trust an orthodontist specialist.

There are a couple of ways to check if your doctor is a specialist. One way is to check their credentials and make sure they completed a 2-3 year program beyond dental school at an accredited institution. The other way is to look for them in the website [braces.org](http://braces.org). This is the website of the American Association of Orthodontists, an association that only orthodontists can belong to. This website has a search feature to locate orthodontists in your area and also has a lot of educational material for patients and parents.

# 6 HOW LONG DOES TREATMENT TAKE?

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Orthodontic treatment in adolescents and adults usually takes between 12-30 months. The treatment time varies depending on the complexity of every case. Sometimes treatment might be longer depending on the circumstances.

Early preventive treatment at a younger age usually takes about 6-12 months. Minor problems in adolescents and adults can sometimes be corrected in as little as 6-12 months in most cases.





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## WHAT TREATMENT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE?



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With the recent advances in technology, there are now numerous ways to straighten your teeth that can suit your lifestyle.

The vast majority of cases in the US in adolescent patients are still treated with traditional metal braces. Metal braces have evolved with time and are now smaller, smoother, and more comfortable than ever.

The science behind the wires has come tremendous lengths in the last years, and newer wires that place gentler forces on your teeth are now available. These advances make orthodontic treatment much easier and comfortable to go through, and the old ways of tightening braces are no longer a problem.

Other braces available are:

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- WildSmiles: these are specially designed orthodontic brackets that come in a variety of fun shapes including Stars, Hearts, Sports Balls, Footballs, Flowers and Super-Diamonds®.
- Self-ligating braces. These hightech braces are more comfortable, provide faster treatment, fewer appointments, shorter appointments and are easier to clean.
- Clear braces: these work just like metal braces but are made of a transparent material, making them much more esthetic.
- Invisalign®: Is a series of customized, clear aligners that move your teeth into position in an esthetic and comfortable way.
- Hidden braces are custom made braces that go behind your teeth, giving you that perfect smile you've always wanted...All without anyone ever knowing you are wearing braces!

I hope you have found this information as helpful as so many others have. I want to thank you for downloading this report and congratulate you on being a proactive parent that wants to give your child the best in life.

Think of the number of people and encounters that await your child in their lifetime, both personally and professionally. Imagine them facing all those moments with confidence and a smile that will impress everyone around them. I have seen the transformation that a great smile can have on a child, improving not only their smile but also their self esteem, making them more outgoing, social, even more willing to answer questions in class.

That is why we are so passionate about what we do and love seeing the results and effect that we can have on a patient's life.

We are ready whenever you are, so give us a call to schedule a free consultation with our smile specialists and get your child started on the journey to a beautiful smile that will last a lifetime.



# MEET DR. CARDENAS

Dr. Cardenas received her Certificate in Orthodontics from Nova Southeastern University and her Masters Degree in Orthodontics from Universidad Intercontinental, Mexico City. She was also granted her dental degree from Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas.

Dr. Cardenas has over 20 years of experience in the field and has passed the written examination of the American Board of Orthodontics, the only specialty board recognized by the American Dental Association.

Besides private practice she has been an Associate Professor in the Postgraduate Department of Orthodontics at Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine since 2006.

She is an active member of the ADA, American Association of Orthodontists and South Florida Association of Orthodontists.

On her free time Dr. Cardenas enjoys spending time with her husband and her three gracious children.

I am ready whenever you are, so give me a call to schedule a **FREE** consultation and get your child started on the journey to a beautiful smile that will last a lifetime.

**CLICK HERE TO SCHEDULE YOUR  
FREE CONSULTATION!!!  
OR CALL US AT (305) 290-1839**



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