

CORINNA ST ORTHODONTICS

The Definitive
Guide to
Orthodontic
Treatment



The Definitive Guide to Orthodontic Treatment

A beautiful smile is a confident smile. It is a reflection of who you are and shows your personality. Your smile is a key part of your appearance.

In this comprehensive guide, we will give you an overview of how orthodontic treatment can enhance your smile and solve common dental problems that may lead to dental ill health and poor general wellbeing.

We will explain simply and clearly what orthodontic treatment is, the dental issues we see, and the various treatments available. Getting braces can be a change to your lifestyle and it is important to know what to expect, so we will take you through the process of what it's like to live with braces.

The Australian Society of Orthodontics recommends that all children have an orthodontic assessment by the age of eight. Most orthodontists tend to provide treatment after all permanent teeth have come through. But adults can be treated too and there are plenty of treatment options to suit your lifestyle.



With more than 20 years' experience, Dr Sam Whittle has a specialised understanding of the growth and development of the teeth and jaws and applies this knowledge in his treatment of patients. He understands that everyone's smile, teeth and mouth are unique and therefore focuses on recommending a solution that will correct any dental issues. This is particularly true in young patients where he works with their natural growth as much as possible.





What are common orthodontic concerns?

There are various dental concerns that can be easily corrected with the help of orthodontics. Not only can these concerns detract from a beautiful smile, they can also cause simple dental health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. In some cases, there are other conditions that might need the help of an orthodontist, such as breathing difficulties, facial pain, dysfunctional jaw joints and medical syndromes.

The most common dental problems include a dysfunctional bite, such as an overbite or an underbite, crooked teeth and overcrowding.

While it is true there are better times than others to have orthodontic treatment, you are never too old to undergo treatment.

At Corinna St Orthodontics in Canberra, a successful, long-lasting smile depends on the combined efforts of the whole team. Your treatment plan is a team effort and vital to the most successful outcome possible. The most important member of this team, though, is you.

What is orthodontics?

Orthodontics is an area of dentistry that manages the growth and development of the face and jaws. It aims to diagnose, prevent and treat common dental problems, often by correcting the alignment of the teeth and jaws to improve aesthetics and function. Devices such as braces, aligners and plates are used to move the teeth into the correct position.

An orthodontist is a dentist who, by postgraduate study at university, has become a registered specialist in orthodontics. He or she is the most qualified person to diagnose, prevent and treat any problems you might have with the alignment of your teeth and jaws. Only an orthodontist, sometimes on the recommendation of your general dentist, can determine whether you will need treatment.

- 1 **You** must communicate what you are expecting, stick to your treatment plan and understand the importance of regular visits to your orthodontist throughout your entire treatment.
- 2 Your **family** plays an important part in supporting you to make important decisions and help guide you through treatment.
- 3 Your **general dentist** is imperative and we make sure we keep them informed of your progress and the need for ongoing maintenance.
- 4 Your **orthodontic team** will work with you during the treatment process to ensure you are cared for at all times.



Orthodontic treatment phases

With the very latest orthodontic techniques, Dr Sam Whittle offers a treatment option that will best suit your individual needs.

While adult patients can have treatment well into their later years, orthodontic treatment can be provided for children who are as young as seven years old. The Australian Society of Orthodontists strongly recommends all children have a comprehensive orthodontic examination by eight years of age.

It's never too late to straighten your teeth, refresh your smile and keep your teeth for the rest of your life. At Corinna St Orthodontics, we treat three types of orthodontic patients.

Children

Also called interceptive orthodontics, with early screening we are able to recognise and correct potential problems in children's dental growth from around age 7 to 8, before the problems become more serious.

Typically a child will have all their adult teeth by the age of 12 or 13. Because children grow differently, it is important that an assessment is made of their dentition. This means we are able to thoroughly evaluate the relationship between the teeth in three dimensions and address any impending problems in your child at the earliest stage.

Potential early dental problems include severe crowding, cross bite, open bite, overbite or gummy smiles. While immediate treatment is usually not necessary at the time of the initial consultation, a future treatment plan can be discussed if orthodontic treatment is likely to be needed in the future.

An orthodontist can:

- » guide jaw growth and teeth positioning, plus lower the risk of trauma to protruded teeth
- » improve how the lips meet, which can affect overall facial appearance
- » correct harmful oral habits.



Orthodontic treatment phases



Adolescents

By age 12, most, if not all of the permanent teeth have come through and are in place. Between the ages of 11 and 15 is the most common time for orthodontic treatment because crooked teeth, gaps and bad bites can be easily seen and detected.

Having braces is not uncommon for children and teenagers, and this age range is a good time to have braces because children are growing rapidly and orthodontists can usually take advantage of this growth to help shape the bite and teeth correctly.

Adults

Orthodontic treatment when you are an adult can help improve your smile and is a very common procedure. Not only can it enhance your smile but, because properly aligned teeth are easier to clean than crooked ones, orthodontic treatment often leads to better health of your teeth, mouth and gums.

Unfortunately, left untreated, crooked teeth and a bad bite can cause gum and bone loss, tooth decay, and wearing of the enamel and the teeth surfaces, along with headaches and jaw pain.



Orthodontic treatment options

There are many different teeth straightening solutions because everyone's teeth are different. Orthodontics is not a one-size-fits-all approach because each individual person has a different set of dental concerns. At Corinna St Orthodontics we focus on identifying the problems first, then developing a tailored solution with appropriate treatment.

Treatment options can include:

- » invisible and lingual braces, including Incognito
- » Invisalign 'aligner braces'
- » clear, ceramic aesthetic braces
- » standard stainless steel braces
- » removable plates for minor problems.

However, all braces have one thing in common, and that is they apply gentle pressure on the teeth to move them into the correct alignment.

At Corinna St Orthodontics we use the Tip-Edge Plus braces system because we believe it delivers the lightest possible pressure and force, ultimately creating a greater comfort factor for you during your orthodontic treatment. This system is also successful in providing the maximum tooth movement from start to finish, meaning a reduced treatment time and fewer appointments.

We also use Incognito lingual (invisible) braces and Invisalign clear aligners.



Orthodontic treatment options

Lingual (invisible) braces

Lingual braces sit on the inside surfaces of your teeth and as such are almost invisible. Dr Whittle uses Incognito lingual braces for patients who are concerned about the aesthetics of standard braces and want to reduce the appearance of their braces throughout treatment.

Under certain circumstances there is also the option to only treat the top or bottom front teeth using Incognito Lite braces, which can re-align the front 6–8 teeth.

Clear plastic aligners

A set of aligners, such as Invisalign, is an invisible solution to wearing braces. A series of custom aligners sit over the teeth to gradually correct crooked teeth or dysfunctional bites. These aligners are similar to a mouthguard or splint, but are so thin they go unnoticed by those around you. They are removable, which means you can take them out to eat and to clean your teeth.

Clear braces

Clear braces are, as their name suggests, braces made from a clear material. Usually they are made from ceramic or plastic. Dr Whittle uses Tip-Edge Plus ceramic braces with special tooth-coloured wires. While they provide the full treatment, just as standard braces do, the beauty of clear braces is that they are less noticeable, which means you feel a heightened sense of confidence.

Standard metal braces

Standard metal braces are an excellent option for orthodontic treatment and have successful results. Standard braces are very robust and are a highly popular choice of treatment to straighten crooked teeth among a variety of demographics, including children, teenagers and adults.

Removable plates

For some very minor corrections Dr Whittle uses removable plates. These are not suitable for most bite problems but can be extremely useful in limited cases where only minor tooth movements are required.



Living with braces

Living with braces is a change from your normal everyday lifestyle at the beginning but only until you get used to them. Sometimes when you've just had braces attached, your teeth can become sore or tender. That's why it's important to eat soft foods and take care of your teeth during the adjustment period.

Caring for your braces

In conjunction with treatment, proper home care helps you get the smile you've always dreamed of.

While braces are strong and sturdy, you must still be careful when you are having orthodontic treatment so you don't damage or break them. Unfortunately, broken braces can mean extra appointments and possibly a longer treatment time.

If you play sports, please remember to wear a mouthguard. At Corinna St Orthodontics we encourage the use of mouthguards for anyone playing contact sport, in keeping with the recommendations of the Australian Dental Association.



Living with braces

Brushing your teeth

When you wear braces, there are some things you need to do to make sure you clean them properly, which includes cleaning the brackets and wires of the appliance as well as your teeth and gums.

Here's a guide for you to follow each time you brush your teeth:

- » Remove elastics before brushing if they are part of your appliance and treatment plan.
- » We strongly recommend using an electric toothbrush with fluoride toothpaste to brush your teeth, however, if you are very careful, a small, soft toothbrush will work.
- » Hold the brush at a 45-degree angle and brush up and down where the gums meet the teeth using small circular movements. Spend about 10 seconds on each tooth before moving to the next.
- » As you are doing this, gently brush the braces. Ensure you press firmly enough so the bristles of the brush disperse into the gaps between the wire and the tooth. You should brush in and around the bracket and underneath the wire.
- » Once you have finished brushing the outside surfaces of your teeth, do the inside surfaces.
- » After you have finished, replace your elastics if you are have been asked to wear them.

Teeth-friendly foods

Did you know there are foods that can damage your braces? This is why you should avoid foods that are chewy, sticky or hard. Crunchy foods like apples and carrots can be chopped into small bite-size pieces before eating to help reduce the stress on your braces.

Drink plenty of water and avoid sugary foods and drinks such as lollies, cordial and soft drink. These types of food and drink can cause tooth decay because the bacteria in your mouth convert sugar into acid that dissolves the surface of your teeth. You should also avoid food and drink that has a high acid content. This includes diet soft drinks, sports drinks and food dressings such as vinegar.



Why choose Corinna St Orthodontics?



Dr Sam Whittle, the owner of Corinna St Orthodontics and a leading orthodontist in Canberra, has helped hundreds of patients like you achieve the smile they've always wanted. He can help you too.

We understand your smile is part of you and we are committed to providing an extremely high standard of work. From the initial One-Step Exam through to completion of your treatment, your smile is in good hands.

Our team is **caring** and attentive and we offer **tailored solutions** to suit your individual needs. Our various treatment options mean we can offer all aspects of orthodontic treatment in straightening crooked teeth and correcting other dental problems. Getting braces at Corinna St Orthodontics is an uplifting experience that creates a fresh smile and a new-found confidence. We want an **optimum outcome** for you because we want your teeth to be yours for ever.



Why choose Corinna St Orthodontics?

About Dr Sam Whittle

Becoming an orthodontist and fixing crooked teeth was Dr Sam Whittle's dream career. He can't imagine not being an orthodontist and considers himself a perfectionist when it comes to straightening your teeth.

A registered orthodontist for more than 20 years, Dr Whittle completed his orthodontic training after working for eight years as a general dentist in the Royal Australian Navy, in which he enlisted straight out of dental school.

While completing a Bachelor of Dental Surgery at Adelaide University in South Australia, Dr Whittle was an Infantry Officer in the Army Reserve, but joined the Royal Australian Navy as a Dental Officer after graduating. He was accepted into the Adelaide University Orthodontic Master's Degree in 1992 and later retired as Fleet Dental Surgeon after 13 years of service in the navy, moving into part-time private orthodontic practice in Adelaide in 1997.

Dr Whittle was appointed as a visiting tutor and demonstrator at Adelaide University and was involved in teaching undergraduate dental students and postgraduate orthodontic residents, before him and his family moved to Canberra in 2001. He worked in a nearby associate practice before opening the ultra-modern Corinna St Orthodontics in February 2013.

Dr Whittle is a member of many prestigious professional organisations, including:

- » Current President of the New South Wales Branch of the Australian Society of Orthodontists
- » Assistant Honorary Treasurer for the Australian Society of Orthodontists
- » Fellow of the World Federation of Orthodontists
- » International Member of the American Association of Orthodontists
- » Member of the European Orthodontic Society
- » Member of the Australian Begg Orthodontic Society
- » Member of the Australian Dental Association
- » Member of the ACT Dental Group



Why choose Corinna St Orthodontics?



Dr Whittle voluntarily teaches clinical orthodontics to Sydney University postgraduate orthodontic residents at the Sydney Dental Hospital and when he is not straightening crooked teeth, he enjoys spending time with his family and anything to do with rugby union, including as a local senior referee and junior referee mentor and trainer. He has been a Board Director at Canberra Grammar School since 2007.

Take the next step

To find out how you can achieve a great smile with orthodontic treatment, call Dr Sam Whittle at Corinna St Orthodontics in Woden, Canberra, on (02) 6162 0010 to make an appointment.

We offer you the quintessential family-friendly practice, where your smile is in safe hands.

Our contact details

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