

An Appointment with the Orthodontist

Last week, Mrs. Ramirez took her daughter, Elena, to the dentist for a dental check-up. The dentist didn't find any cavities, but he noticed that Elena's teeth are not straight. He gave Mrs. Ramirez a referral to an orthodontist. Mrs. Ramirez and Elena meet with the orthodontist for a **consultation** before starting any treatment.

Dr. Clark: Thank you for coming, Mrs. Ramirez. Let's look at Elena's x-rays. As you can see, her bottom teeth are **crowded**. They don't have enough room. Her top teeth stick out too far. She has an **overbite**. If we don't correct these problems, Elena could have pain in her jaw and her teeth could **wear unevenly**.

Mrs. Ramirez: What do you suggest?

Dr. Clark: To fix the crowding and the overbite, Elena should wear **braces** for two to three years. We will attach **brackets** and **wires** to her teeth. The braces will push her teeth into the right position. I will need to **adjust** her braces about once a month.

Mrs. Ramirez: And after the braces come off, Elena's teeth will be straight?

Dr. Clark: Well, after we take the braces off, Elena will have to wear a **retainer** to help keep her teeth in place. She will wear the retainer all the time at first, but eventually, she will only have to wear it at night.

Mrs. Ramirez: It sounds like a lot of time and appointments. Will my dental insurance cover this treatment?

Dr. Clark: I don't know. You'll have to call your insurance. I can give you some information about how much braces and orthodontist appointments will cost. Then, you can make your decision. I hope you will call me to schedule Elena's first appointment. Do you have any other questions for me right now?

Mrs. Ramirez: I don't think so. Thank you for the information. We'll consider our options.



Vocabulary Practice

Match the vocabulary words with their definitions.

1. consultation	___ the part of braces that connects the teeth
2. crowding	___ make small changes to something
3. overbite	___ when some teeth are used more than others
4. wear unevenly	___ a device that is attached to the teeth to make them straight
5. braces	___ a device that you wear to keep your teeth straight after your braces come off
6. bracket	___ a free appointment where the orthodontist explains the treatment and how much it costs
7. wire	___ when the top teeth stick out too far
8. adjust	___ the part of braces that are attached to the teeth
9. retainer	___ when the teeth are too close together



Discussion Questions

1. When did your daughter first get braces?
2. How long will she wear them?
3. What problem will the braces correct?
4. Are the braces comfortable? Are they painful?
5. How often does your daughter have an orthodontist appointment?
6. Does your orthodontist explain things to you? Does he or she answer your questions?
7. What is hard for you when you take your daughter to the orthodontist?

Questions for your Orthodontist

Make a list of things you want to talk to your orthodontist about. You can write specific questions, or just a list of topics. Use blank paper if you need it.

