

## **The Road to Straight Teeth: Braces vs. Invisalign**

Your teeth's primary role is to help you bite off and grind down the food you eat so that your body can digest it better. This being the case, if they were located in a less visible part of the body, you would probably pay little to zero attention to the way they look—all that matters is that they are functioning properly.

But because teeth are prominently positioned in the face, minding their appearance becomes a necessity—especially since there is hardly any person born with a perfect set of teeth. For most people, there is always some form of dental imperfection that must be corrected; if left alone, it will significantly affect or alter their facial features.

### **Addressing misalignment**

It's not uncommon for a person to have dental issues like crowding, overbites, crossbites and underbites. Traditionally, these problems are rectified with the use of metal braces—wires and elastics attached to the teeth. In more recent years, however, another option has emerged: clear plastic aligners called Invisalign.

Which device should you choose? A side-by-side comparison should be done to help you take the first step toward the road to straight teeth: Braces vs. Invisalign.

### **Does the device:**

#### **Effectively correct issues like overbites, underbites, crossbites and crowding?**

Braces: Yes

Invisalign: Yes

#### **Straighten the teeth?**

Braces: Yes

Invisalign: Yes

#### **Feel comfortable?**

Braces: No. Patients report experiencing discomfort because the metal wires scrape against the tongue and the inside of the cheeks, causing soreness and pain.

Invisalign: Yes. The aligners are made of smooth plastic and they can be removed while doing certain activities, like eating, speaking in front of people or playing sports.

#### **Allow you to eat and enjoy whatever food you like?**

Braces: No. Conventional braces cannot be removed once installed, and the treatment period can last for years (depending on your specific case). You need to avoid foods that are hard, chewy or sticky, as these can get caught on the wires or cause them to come loose.

Invisalign: Yes. The plastic aligners are removable, so you can take them off before eating and put them back in when you're done.

**Allow you to brush and floss your teeth normally?**

Braces: No. Your dental hygiene tasks need to be performed with more care than usual because the braces remain attached to your teeth as you brush and floss.

Invisalign: Yes. The removable aligners let you brush your teeth and floss as usual.

**Correct your teeth without attracting other people's attention?**

Braces: No. Metal braces are highly visible when you smile, talk, and eat—and they will be prominently displayed for everyone to see throughout the entire treatment period. This can alter your physical appearance.

Invisalign: Yes. The clear aligners are practically invisible so people will hardly notice that you are having your teeth fixed by a dental device.

**Require frequent visits to the dentist for maintenance?**

Braces: Yes. Patients will need to regularly visit their dentist—about every two weeks—to have the wires checked and the elastic adjusted as needed.

Invisalign: No. You will only need to see the dentist every four to six weeks to be fitted with a new set of aligners as the treatment progresses.