

Orthodontic Information Booklet



MEET DR CLARA GIBSON

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BDentSc 2010, University of Dublin, Ireland

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Dr Clara provides orthodontic care for children, teens and adults, with a focus on early monitoring, thoughtful timing, and long-term stability. She plans treatment around each patient's growth, lifestyle and goals, and works closely with dentists, speech therapists and other healthcare partners when coordinated care is beneficial.

Her approach is calm, clear and supportive — helping young patients feel at ease, and giving adults confidence in the treatment journey ahead.

"I believe that orthodontic care should feel understandable and manageable — never overwhelming. My aim is to guide you through each step with clarity, so you always know why we're taking a particular approach and what to expect next. Whether we're monitoring growth or planning active treatment, I hope this booklet gives you a clear picture of how we work and how we can support your smile over time." - Dr Clara Gibson



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The Science Behind Healthy Orthodontic Development



The Science Behind Healthy Orthodontic Development

A balanced bite supports more than straight teeth. It influences breathing, sleep, jaw growth, speech, and long-term stability of the teeth, gums and jaws.

WHY

Orthodontics Matters:

- ⇒ The upper jaw forms part of the nasal floor. When it grows well, airflow improves.
- ⇒ The palate remains flexible until roughly age 13 — an important window for gentle expansion.
- ⇒ Bone adapts throughout life. Teeth can move safely at any age with controlled forces.

"When we guide growth early, we're supporting the foundations that help a child breathe, chew, and sleep with comfort."



TWO

Orthodontic Journeys

Orthodontic care takes different forms depending on whether a smile is still developing or already mature.

For Children & Teens:

A growth-guided pathway focused on sufficient space for both teeth and the tongue, airway, and jaw balance.

For Adults:

A refinement pathway designed to improve alignment, comfort, and long-term stability.



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Orthodontics For Growing Smiles



Orthodontics for Growing Smiles

Early care isn't about straightening teeth early. It's about **supporting natural development** and intervening only when timing truly matters.

STEP 1

Early Assessment (around age 7)

A relaxed appointment where we evaluate:

- ⇒ spacing
- ⇒ jaw development
- ⇒ tongue posture
- ⇒ breathing habits
- ⇒ eruption patterns

Most children do not need treatment right away — many simply enter a monitoring phase.

*“Early evaluation offers peace of mind —
and the opportunity to guide growth at the right moment.”*



STEP 2

Expansion & Growth Guidance (ages 7–10)

When needed, gentle expansion helps to:

- ⇒ create space for all permanent teeth
- ⇒ support nasal breathing
- ⇒ guide the arches into a balanced shape
- ⇒ encourage a healthy tongue position



Science fact: *The upper jaw consists of two halves that fuse around puberty. Before then, it responds well to gentle widening.*

Duration: 6–9 months

Visit rhythm: approximately every 6 weeks

STEP 3

Guiding Jaw Growth (ages 10–13)

During a child's natural growth spurt, functional appliances can help guide the jaws into better alignment.

This timing is important — after adolescence, skeletal changes become more limited.

Goal: balanced jaw development for a comfortable bite.

STEP 4

Full Alignment & Bite Refinement (ages 12+)

Once the adult teeth are present, treatment may focus on:

- ⇒ straightening teeth
- ⇒ refining the bite
- ⇒ supporting long-term stability

Typical duration: 18–24 months

This stage may follow early expansion or may be the only treatment needed if early development has progressed well.

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Orthodontics For Adults



Orthodontics for Adults

It's never too late to improve alignment, comfort, or support for future dental work.

Adults often seek orthodontic care to:

- ⇒ correct crowding or shifting for aesthetics
- ⇒ improve bite comfort
- ⇒ support easier cleaning
- ⇒ prepare for more conservative implants, veneers, or restorations

Treatment options include:

- ⇒ clear aligners (e.g., Invisalign®)
- ⇒ ceramic braces
- ⇒ lingual braces positioned behind the teeth



"There's no one-size-fits-all approach to adult orthodontics. We have a range of treatment options available, and the right choice comes down to your lifestyle, comfort, and aesthetic preferences — which we always take time to discuss together."



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Braces Vs Aligners



Braces vs Aligners

A clear comparison to help you decide what suits your needs.

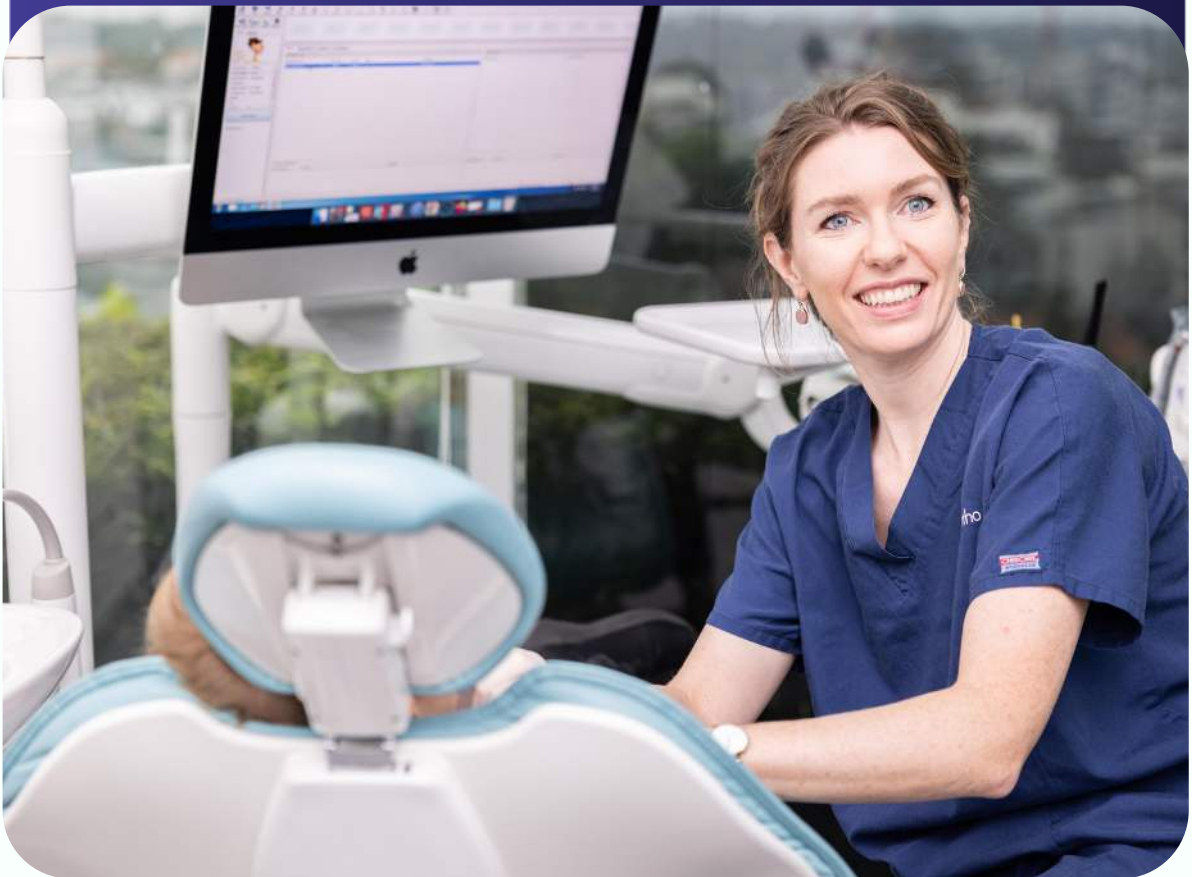
| | Fixed Braces | Clear Aligners (e.g. Invisalign®*) |
|----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Visibility | Brackets on teeth | Nearly invisible trays |
| Lifestyle | Always on | Remove for meals & brushing |
| Comfort | Mild tightness after adjustments | Smooth edges, minimal irritation |
| Hygiene | Extra brushing required | Normal brushing and flossing |
| Suitability | Any age or complexity | Any age or complexity |
| Discipline | Low | High — must be worn 20–22 hrs/day |
| Treatment Time | 12–30 months | Similar; compliance-dependent |

*Invisalign® is a registered trademark of Align Technology Inc.



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Your Orthodontic Journey



Your Orthodontic Journey

A simple, predictable structure designed to keep treatment smooth and efficient.

1. Consultation

Digital scans, photos, X-rays, and a detailed review of goals.

2. Planning

Digital design mapping the movement of teeth or the development of the jaws.

3. Appliance Fit

A carefully planned visit, typically lasting 30–45 minutes, that does not require injections or anaesthesia.

4. Adjustments

Short visits every 6 weeks to review progress and make adjustments.

5. Removal & Retainers

Gentle removal, followed by a digital scan for custom retainers.

6. Retainer Reviews

Regular checks during the first year to support long-term stability.



Your Orthodontic Package Includes:

- ⇒ All appliances
- ⇒ All adjustment appointments
- ⇒ Upper and lower removable retainers
- ⇒ Breakage appointments at no extra cost
- ⇒ One year of post-treatment reviews

Keeping Your Smile Stable

Retainers help teeth settle into their new positions while surrounding tissues and bone adapt.

Wear schedule:

Initial phase: full-time wear

Maintenance phase (1–2 years): night-time wear

Ongoing: occasional night-time wear to support long-term stability



Frequently Asked Questions — Parents

Does my child need early treatment?

Not always. Many children simply benefit from early monitoring, allowing us to guide development and step in only if and when treatment is needed.

Does breathing or tongue posture matter?

Yes. Breathing patterns and tongue posture can play a role in jaw development and tooth alignment, which is why we take a holistic view during assessment.

Will treatment affect sports or school?

Orthodontic treatment does not require anaesthesia, and most patients are able to return to school or activities straight after their appointment. Where possible, appointments can also be scheduled around important commitments.

What if we relocate?

Our digital records make transferring care straightforward. As we use internationally recognised orthodontic systems, treatment can be continued with another provider from the same stage, should you relocate.



Frequently Asked Questions — Adults

Is it too late for orthodontics?

No. Teeth can move safely at any age with appropriate planning.

Which option is better for me: braces or aligners?

We'll guide you toward the option that best suits your goals, clinical needs, and lifestyle.

Can treatment help jaw tension?

In some cases, improving alignment may help balance bite forces and reduce strain.

Can I travel during treatment?

Yes. Adjustment visits are planned in advance to accommodate travel where possible.

Troubleshooting & First-Week Tips

Broken bracket?

Please contact us — repairs are included as part of your care.

Lost aligner?

We'll advise whether to move to the next tray or arrange a replacement.

Mild discomfort after adjustments?

This is common for a few days. Softer foods and warm salt-water rinses can help.

Next Steps

Whether you're guiding a growing smile or refining your own, orthodontics is about balance, confidence, and long-term comfort. For more information or to arrange a consultation, visit

www.expatdental.com

This information is intended for patient education in accordance with MOH (HCSA Advertisement) Regulations 2023. Treatment plans are individual; outcomes vary.



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