

# Timing of orthodontic treatment

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Last update: Sunday, 24 Apr 2016 at 3.34 am.

Intervention in the mixed dentition is advisable in some circumstances. Overbite reduction and functional appliance therapy is best started in late mixed dentition stage. They rely on growth for success.

Most orthodontic treatment is started in early permanent dentition as this usually coincides with the time when teeth that may be considered for extraction have erupted. Also patient co-operation headed by peer pressure tends to be better at this age than in mid-teens. Also there is a more rapid response of periodontium to orthodontic forces and potential for enhanced spontaneous tooth movement during the growth period. This excludes cases where a severe skeletal problem exists that is likely to be exacerbated by growth. This type of treatment is best deferred till late teens when a combined orthodontic /surgical approach can be considered.