

# The Right Time for an Orthodontic Check-Up: No Later than Age 7

Even though most people think of pre-teens and teens when they think of orthodontics, there are good reasons your child should get an orthodontic evaluation much sooner. The American Association of Orthodontists recommends a check-up with an orthodontic specialist no later than age 7.

## Why Your Child Should Get An Orthodontic Check-up No Later Than Age 7:

- Orthodontists can spot subtle problems with jaw growth and emerging teeth while some baby teeth are still present.
- While your child's teeth may appear to be straight, there could be a problem that only an orthodontist can detect.
- The check-up may reveal that your child's bite is fine. Or, the orthodontist may identify a developing problem but recommend monitoring the child's growth and development, and then if indicated, begin treatment at the appropriate time for the child. In other cases, the orthodontist might find a problem that can benefit from early treatment.
- Early treatment may prevent more serious problems from developing and may make treatment at a later age shorter and less complicated.
- In some cases, the orthodontist will be able to achieve results that may not be possible once the face and jaws have finished growing.
- Early treatment may give your orthodontist the chance to:
  - guide jaw growth
  - lower the risk of trauma to protruded front teeth
  - correct harmful oral habits
  - improve appearance
  - guide permanent teeth into a more favorable position
  - improve the way lips meet
- Through an early orthodontic evaluation, you'll be giving your child the best opportunity for a healthy, beautiful smile.

Because patients differ in both physiological development and treatment needs, the orthodontist's goal is to provide each patient with the most appropriate treatment at the most appropriate time.