

# invisalign

Dr Jamie & Dr Doug would like you to read this information carefully

## **Invisalign® - Frequently Asked Questions by Patients**

### **GENERAL**

#### **What is Invisalign?**

Invisalign is the invisible new way to straighten teeth without braces. Invisalign uses a series of clear, removable aligners to gradually straighten teeth, without metal or wires. It combines 21st century technology and revolutionary manufacturing to customise a treatment for each individual patient.

#### **Does Invisalign really work?**

Yes. In both clinical research and in dental practices around the world, Invisalign has been proven effective at straightening teeth. Over 315,000 patients have either been treated or are in treatment and over 32,500 dentists have been trained on how to use Invisalign.

#### **Does Invisalign work as well as normal braces?**

In most cases, Invisalign has proven to be as effective at straightening teeth as traditional braces. The level of Invisalign experience will determine how a dentist decides how to treat a patient, be it with Invisalign or traditional braces. Some severe cases may require treatment using Invisalign together with another teeth straightening technique.

#### **How does Invisalign work?**

Invisalign uses 3-D computer imaging technology to depict the complete treatment plan from the initial position to the final desired position from which a series of custom-made “aligners” are produced. Each aligner moves teeth incrementally and is worn for about two weeks, then replaced by the next in the series until the final position is achieved.

#### **Where can I see pictures of actual finished Invisalign cases?**

To see what just a few of the many thrilled patients are saying about Invisalign, please visit the Invisalign website [www.invisalign.com](http://www.invisalign.com) (click on the “Past Patients” tab). You will also be able to see the before and after pictures of patients who have been through Invisalign treatment.

#### **What are the primary benefits of Invisalign?**

There are four primary benefits of Invisalign:

1. Invisalign is nearly invisible — you can straighten your teeth without anyone knowing.
2. Invisalign is removable — you can eat and drink what you want in treatment; you can also brush and floss normally to maintain good oral hygiene.
3. Invisalign is comfortable — there are no metal brackets or wires to cause mouth irritation: no metal or wires also means you spend less time in the doctor's chair getting adjustments.
4. Invisalign allows you to view your own virtual treatment plan before you start — so you can see how your straight teeth will look when your treatment is complete.

#### **What are aligners made of?**

Aligners are made of clear, strong medical grade non-toxic plastic that is virtually invisible when worn.

### **What do aligners look like?**

Aligners are nearly invisible and look similar to clear tooth-whitening trays, but are custom-made for a better fit to move teeth. Some orthodontists have referred to them as “contact lenses for teeth.”

### **How long will treatment take?**

The length of treatment is dependent on the severity of individual cases. Treatment may vary from anywhere between six months to two years with an average treatment taking around 12 to 14 months.

### **Is this a new way to straighten teeth?**

For years, orthodontists have used removable appliances for limited treatment. Today, with the application of computer technology and mass-customised manufacturing, Invisalign is able to treat a broader range of cases with greater precision.

### **How old is the company?**

Align Technology, Inc., the company that manufactures Invisalign aligners, was founded in 1997. It is listed on the NASDAQ Stock Exchange in the USA. (Stock Code: ALGN)

### **How old is this technology?**

In 1945 an American orthodontist Dr. H.D. Kesling envisioned that one day, modern technology would enable the use of a series of tooth positioners to produce the kinds of movements required for comprehensive orthodontic treatment, With Invisalign, this is now possible. Using advanced computer technology, Invisalign generates a series of customised appliances, called “aligners”. Each aligner is worn sequentially by the patient to produce extensive tooth movements in both upper and lower arches.

### **How many patients are being treated with Invisalign®?**

There are over 315,000 patients being treated with Invisalign and the number grows daily. Invisalign was launched in Australia in February 2002 and already over a three hundred Australian dentists are accredited to treat patients with Invisalign.

### **Do dentists need special training in order to use Invisalign®?**

While Invisalign can be used with virtually any treatment philosophy, specific training is needed. All dentists interested in treating patients with Invisalign must attend a workshop before cases will be accepted from their office.

### **How does Invisalign effectively move teeth?**

Like brackets and arch wires, the Invisalign aligner moves teeth through the appropriate placement of controlled force on the teeth. The principal difference is that Invisalign not only controls forces, but also controls the timing of the force application. At each stage, only certain teeth are allowed to move, and these movements are determined by the dentist treatment plan for that particular stage. This results in an efficient force delivery system.

## **GETTING STARTED**

### **Have Invisalign conducted clinical tests or studies?**

As is typical of medical product introductions, Invisalign conducted extensive testing prior to commercially releasing the product. Various US universities have conducted clinical studies and numerous clinical articles have been published by US and Australian orthodontists. Refer to the web site [www.invisalign.com](http://www.invisalign.com) for an updated list of these articles.

### **Is Invisalign available outside Australia?**

Invisalign is marketed in USA, Canada, Mexico, UK, Germany, France, Italy, Hong Kong (China) and various other countries. Check the website ([www.invisalign.com](http://www.invisalign.com)) for further details.

## **COST**

### **How much does Invisalign cost?**

Invisalign is a premium product compared to traditional braces. It uses state of the art technology to create a series of customised aligners for each patient and has significant patient benefits. The cost of treatment is based upon the complexity of treatment required, this can work out to about \$160/month when spread out over 48 months. For more information speak to Michelle and she will assist you with any queries you may have.

### **Do offer payment plans for Invisalign treatment?**

Individual treating dentists may offer differing payment plans that may mean that the full amount does not have to be paid up front. Please ask your treating dentist for their payment policy.

## **Taxation Benefits**

Through your tax each financial year you can claim on your medical, dental, optical, physiotherapy and other gap payments.

For every dollar the **family** spends over \$1500 you can claim a 20% rebate on submission of your tax return.

It is very important to keep all your receipts and try to divert expenditures into that financial year to maximise your tax rebate.

### **Does insurance cover Invisalign?**

If your insurance policy has orthodontic coverage, Invisalign should be covered to a similar extent as conventional braces as Invisalign is normally prescribed for full course of orthodontic treatment. However, as medical benefits differ significantly from policy to policy, each patient should check with their health fund.

### **My insurance company has not heard of Invisalign.**

Invisalign is an emerging form of technology within orthodontics in Australia. It often takes insurance companies to formally recognise new technologies in their policies. Please consult your treating dentist to ascertain the type of treatment you will be receiving and determine their billing policies in relation to private medical insurance. Invisalign Australia can provide assistance if necessary.

### **Will there be an initial consultation fee?**

In most cases, there will be an initial consultation fee charged by the dentist although some practices offer a free initial consultation. This price or this consultation will vary from one practice to another.

### **Is there a price reduction if I only require the top/bottom aligner?**

The price for Invisalign is less if only one arch needs treatment. However since the charge is based upon the consultations needed and the 3D modeling is a similar cost, single arch treatment does not mean that the price will necessarily be halved. Please consult your treating dentist for their pricing policies.

### **Can I receive limited treatment with Invisalign?**

Invisalign can be used to provide a limited form of orthodontic treatment e.g. orthodontic relapse or minor crowding cases for a lesser fee. Check with your accredited dentist to see if this is suitable for you and what the charges will be.

### **Does Invisalign have a guarantee?**

Invisalign is as effective at straightening teeth as traditional methods of orthodontics but largely depends upon a patient's biology and compliance with treatment. As such, Invisalign cannot guarantee that a patient's teeth will move exactly as predicted.

The treating dentist is responsible to use their experience and skill to treatment plan and monitor the appropriate treatment as it progresses. If necessary, additional treatment with Invisalign or other forms may be needed. Discuss this further with your treating dentist or orthodontist during your initial consultation.

### **Can I claim any rebate on Invisalign treatment?**

Yes. There is a government rebate that is available to a taxpayer whose eligible net medical expenses in the year or income exceed \$1,500 (net of Medicare and any health fund refund). The amount of the rebate is 20% of the excess over \$1,500 but cannot exceed the amount of tax otherwise paid. The rebate is claimed when the patient lodges their annual income tax return.

*For example, a patient undergoes Invisalign treatment at a cost of \$6000. Assuming the patient can claim \$1000 back from a private health fund and none from Medicare, the rebate would be as follows.*

*[\$6000 - \$1000] = \$5000 x 20% = \$1000*

***The rebate from each fund will vary and if in a fund you should check what your benefit would be.***

## **CASE SELECTION**

### **What can Invisalign treat?**

Invisalign does not treat patients. Dentists do, and with experience they can use Invisalign to treat a vast majority of adults and adolescents who want a better smile. For more information on what types of cases can be treated or to see if your type of dentition is suitable for Invisalign treatment, please go to [www.invisalign.com](http://www.invisalign.com).

### **How do I know if I'm a candidate for Invisalign?**

Align Technology defers to the professional judgment of the treating doctor in determining how Invisalign® can be incorporated into the treatment plan. Align Technology almost never rejects the cases submitted by our doctors, as we currently accept over 98% of all cases we receive but only a dentist who has been Invisalign accredited can determine if Invisalign is an effective option for you.

### **What conditions would make me unsuitable for Invisalign?**

Only the treating dentist/orthodontist is able to determine whether your particular case is suitable to be treated with Invisalign. Three types of tooth movements have found to be less predictably achieved with Invisalign alone:

- Severe derotations of cylindrical teeth
- Complex extrusions
- Closure of large spaces usually associated with extractions of teeth other than lower incisors.

With more Invisalign experience, doctors may improve the ways they manage the treatment and increase the predictability of these movements.

### **What is the minimum age that Invisalign can treat?**

Almost all teenagers over the age of 14 are eligible for treatment with Invisalign as long as their second (twelve year old) molars are fully erupted.

### **I am currently wearing braces - can I make the switch to the Invisalign?**

Many patients are being treated with some form of combination of braces and Invisalign. You should consult your dentist to determine the best treatment for you.

### **Does the procedure work on overbites (overjets) and how?**

Yes, Invisalign can correct mild to moderate overbites. The aligners create a force on the front teeth causing them to intrude, thus correcting the overbite.

### **Are there certain dental conditions that automatically exclude you from being an eligible patient?**

Yes, certain dental conditions can restrict you from being an eligible patient — for further information, please consult your dentist. Cases that are difficult or unsuitable for Invisalign may include up-righting severely tipped teeth, cases where not all the permanent teeth have erupted, cases with multiple missing teeth, patients with poor periodontal condition or patients that want to change their facial profile.

**Are crowns a factor In Invisalign treatment?**

No, crowns are usually not a factor in Invisalign treatment. However, small composites called attachments are sometimes bonded onto teeth to help achieve certain movements. In these cases, the location of crowns must be carefully evaluated by an Invisalign dentist or orthodontist.

**Will TMJ affect Invisalign treatment?**

TMJ refers to the temporomandibular, or jaw joint. Individuals can have a number of problems with the jaw joint, some of which can be aggravated by appliances and treatments like Invisalign. To find out if your TMJ problem will adversely impact orthodontic treatment, consult an Invisalign accredited dentist or orthodontist.

**Can Invisalign close gaps (space closure)?**

Yes. Spaces between teeth are generally easy to close with Invisalign. However, the size and location of the spaces will need to be evaluated.

**Are bridges a factor in Invisalign treatment?**

Because bridges firmly link two or more teeth together, they can offer significant resistance to tooth movement. Your dentist will be able to determine whether bridges will be a factor in your treatment.

**WHILE IN TREATMENT****How long will it take to begin treatment after the initial consultation?**

After or during the initial consultation, your treating dentist/orthodontist will need to take xrays, photos and moulds of your teeth. These records will be sent to the US to be used to manufacture your custom made aligners. This process will take approximately 6 weeks (from the time the records are sent to the US to the time treatment can begin).

**What happens at the initial insertion appointment?**

Your dentist may have to place some composite “buttons” on some of your teeth. The buttons are used to help move the teeth, and are tooth coloured so virtually undetectable. Sometimes the dentist may need to create some extra space between the teeth to give them room to move. To do this they will polish the sides of the tooth.

**How often must I see the dentist?**

Your dentist will schedule regular appointments — usually about once every six weeks. This is the only way your dentists, Dr Jamie and Dr Doug can be sure that the treatment is progressing as planned.

**Will the treatment be painful?**

Most people experience temporary, minor discomfort for a few days at the beginning of each new stage of treatment. This is normal and is typically described as a feeling of pressure. It is a sign that the Invisalign aligners are working — sequentially moving your teeth to their final destination. This discomfort typically goes away a couple of days after you insert the new aligner in the series.

**Will wearing the Invisalign aligners affect my speech?**

Like all orthodontic treatments, aligners may temporarily affect the speech of some people, and you may have a slight lisp for a day or two. However, as your tongue gets used to having aligners in your mouth, any lisp or minor speech impediment caused by the aligners should disappear.

**Are there restrictions on what I can eat while in treatment?**

No. Unlike traditional orthodontics, you can usually eat whatever you desire while in treatment because you remove your aligners to eat and drink. Thus, there is no need to restrict your consumption of any of your favourite foods and snacks, unless instructed otherwise by your dentist or orthodontist. Also, it is important that you brush your teeth after each meal and prior to re-inserting your aligners to maintain proper hygiene.

**Can I drink with aligners still on?**

You should remove your aligners to drink anything else except water. Leaving aligners on while drinking may stain them and the patient risks decay drinking fluids with sugar in them.

**Will smoking stain the aligners?**

We discourage smoking while wearing aligners because it is possible for the aligners to become discoloured.

**Can I chew gum while wearing aligners?**

No, gum will stick to the aligners. We recommend removing your aligners for all meals and snacks.

**What's the best way to clean my aligners?**

The best way to clean your aligners is by brushing and rinsing them in lukewarm water. Invisalign Australia Pty Ltd also has a cleaning system that can be purchased.

**How often must I wear my aligners?**

Aligners should be worn all day, except when eating, brushing and flossing.

**Can patients use aligners for bleaching teeth while active tooth movement is occurring?**

While we are aware that some patients are using aligners for bleaching, Align Technology, Inc. has not examined the compatibility of currently available bleaching products with our aligners, nor have we demonstrated efficacy in clinical studies. Align recommends that you consult your dentist or orthodontist for more information on whitening teeth.

**What happens after treatment to prevent my teeth from moving again?**

This depends on the outcome of the treatment. Some patients might need a positioner, or conventional retainer. Other patients might need a clear plastic retainer similar to the ones Invisalign makes. Discuss these possibilities with your treating dentist. Every patient is different and outcomes vary.

**What happens if the aligners no longer fit?**

In this case you should contact your dentist immediately who will diagnose what remedial action is needed to bring the treatment back on course. This may involve moving back one or two stages in treatment to a previous aligner or possibly some additional orthodontic treatment.

**What happens at the end of treatment?**

At the end of treatment we will supply a retainer which is sometimes removable and in some cases the retainer will have to be bonded to the teeth on a permanent basis. This is to stop relapse or the teeth moving after completion of treatment. This is an essential step in a successful treatment.