

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

BY DR. ELIYAHU SIMCHA GHERMAN, DDS

WHAT IS THE BEST TIME FOR MY CHILD TO COME SEE THE ORTHODONTIST?

This is a very common question.

The American Association of Orthodontics recommends that your child get an orthodontic check-up no later than age 7.

By then, your child's teeth have developed enough for subtle problems with jaw growth and emerging teeth to be spotted. Most early orthodontic consultations will just give the parent peace of mind that all is well. Other times however, a trained orthodontist can pick up on a developing problem and easily correct it. This can avoid more serious problems later on such as impacted teeth that require surgery, abnormal skeletal growth, or teeth that will end up severely traumatized.

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF ORTHODONTISTS?

The American Association of Orthodontists, or AAO, is one of the biggest worldwide professional organizations for orthodontists. Orthodontists receive an additional two to three years of specialized and rigorous education beyond the four years of dental school to learn the proper way to align and straighten teeth.



Only those with this education are eligible for membership in the AAO. If any of the following signs are present by the age of 7, the AAO recommends consulting with a certified orthodontist.

- Early or late loss of baby teeth
- Breathing through the mouth
- Thumb-sucking or tongue thrusting habits
- Crowded, misplaced, or blocked out teeth
- Jaws that are too far forward or too far back
- Biting the cheek or biting into the roof of the mouth
- Protruding teeth
- Upper and lower teeth that don't meet or meet in an abnormal way
- An unbalanced facial appearance
- Grinding or clenching of teeth

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