



GORTON & SCHMOHL ORTHODONTICS

Two Phase Orthodontics: A Special Kind of Orthodontic Treatment

First Phase Treatment

The goal of the First Phase Treatment is to develop the child's jaw size to make room for the future eruption of permanent teeth and to improve the relationship of the upper and lower jaws. Children sometimes exhibit early signs of jaw problems as they grow and develop. An upper or lower jaw that is growing too much or not enough can benefit from early orthodontic treatment. The early correction can prevent later removal of permanent teeth due to excessive overbite or overcrowding. Leaving such a condition untreated until all permanent teeth erupt could result in a jaw imbalance too severe to achieve an ideal result with braces.

Resting Period

Between phases, retainers are worn at night to maintain the First Phase Treatment results and allow the remaining permanent teeth to erupt. Starting at age ten, children lose twelve primary (baby) teeth and by age twelve or thirteen they gain sixteen permanent teeth. During this period, occasional appointments for observation and retainer adjustments will be necessary, usually on a three to six month basis.

Second Phase Treatment

The goal of the Second Phase Treatment is to position all the permanent teeth to maximize their appearance and function. This is best accomplished by placing braces on all the upper and lower teeth. Due to the improvements made in the First Phase Treatment, the Second Phase Treatment requires less patient involvement (less frequent use of headgear and rubber bands), usually eliminates removing permanent teeth and greatly reduces the time spent in "full braces".