



**MENAI
ORTHODONTICS**

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Invisalign Information Sheet

New to Invisalign? Then let's get you sorted with everything you need to know about this tooth straightening treatment.

What is Invisalign?

The Invisalign System is a hygienic orthodontic treatment that uses an innovative approach to straighten teeth. Virtually invisible, Invisalign uses a series of custom-made removable clear plastic aligners that are worn over teeth to move them gradually into the ideal position. Most people don't even notice they're wearing aligners, allowing them to maintain their lifestyle during treatment.



Is Invisalign treatment right for me?

Invisalign clear aligners can treat a range of tooth straightening issues, ranging from mild tooth movements to more complex cases. Your orthodontist will advise if Invisalign treatment is suitable for your specific needs.

What happens during Invisalign treatment?

While every individual's circumstances are different, here are some general guidelines about what to expect during Invisalign treatment:

- All Invisalign treatments commence by consulting with your orthodontist who will take photos, x-rays, and digital scan to help formulate a treatment plan.
- Your orthodontist will prescribe a treatment plan and Invisalign aligners will be fabricated according to the prescribed treatment.
- A series of custom-made aligners will be given to you, allowing you to change them yourself every seven days.
- Every six to twelve weeks, there will be an appointment with your orthodontist who will monitor treatment progress.

What are attachments?

Depending on treatment, some tooth movements may require 'attachments' to help the aligner grip the teeth.

Attachments are small pieces of enamel-coloured composite fixed to teeth by the orthodontist. The number of attachments varies according to the tooth movements required and not every tooth will have an attachment.

Prior to bonding of material, each tooth requiring an attachment, will be cleaned and prepared for the bonding process to ensure it bonds well. The attachments are then bonded onto teeth where they will remain until the conclusion of treatment.

The placement of attachments provides an anchor point which helps the Invisalign aligner to grip and encourage a specific movement. Placement of an attachment depends on the tooth movement required. Attachments allow the aligner to direct its forces to the tooth more effectively than it could otherwise.



You may also notice small indentations or 'ridges' in your aligners. These are designed to assist with achieving a specific root movement. Whether these ridges are present will depend on each individual's Invisalign treatment plan.

What happens if I break or lose an attachment?

In the event that an attachment is lost or broken, you should immediately contact the practice and we'll schedule an appointment to repair or replace it.

How often do I see my orthodontist during Invisalign treatment?

During Invisalign treatment, check up appointments are required every six to twelve weeks. This allows the orthodontist to monitor treatment progress, check the aligners are fitting well, and make any necessary adjustments.

When can I move onto the next set of aligners?

There's no need to worry about when to move onto your next set of aligners. Your orthodontist will provide clear instructions about when to change your aligners. In most cases, aligners are changed every week unless your orthodontist advises otherwise. Regular visits to your orthodontist every six to twelve weeks to monitor treatment progress means you will always know when it's time for your next set of aligners.

How long before I see results?

Another benefit of the Invisalign system is that results are easily visible sooner. Within a few short months of commencing treatment, it's possible to notice visible changes. A sure sign you're on track, being able to see results for yourself makes it easier to stay positive about your treatment.

Can I have all my aligners at once?

You will be provided with all of your aligners at the beginning of your treatment. Your orthodontist will review progress at your appointments.

Will I need elastics?

Depending on your specific needs, elastics may be prescribed as part of your treatment plan. Your orthodontist will advise you on how to wear elastics and how often they need to be changed.

Do I wear aligners all day?

Invisalign clear aligners are comfortable, which makes them very easy to wear. For treatment to stay on track, it's essential aligners are worn 22 to 24 hours each day. This means removing them only for eating and cleaning. Adhering to this protocol will see you reach your treatment goals faster.

How do I insert the clear aligners?

The orthodontist will show you how to insert the clear aligners and remind you of the following tips to keep in mind each time:

- Wash hands before handling aligners and handle only one aligner at a time.
- Rinse aligners well when removing from packaging.
- Ensure you have the correct aligner, noting each package is sequentially numbered. Never skip ahead unless directed by your orthodontist.
- Each aligner is specifically marked, for top teeth (engraved with a "U" for upper) and one for bottom teeth (engraved with an "L" for lower).
- Either aligner may be inserted first.
- When inserting each aligner, gently push the aligner over the front of teeth and then apply equal pressure with fingertips to the tops of the left and right molars (back teeth) until the aligner clicks into place.
- Do not bite aligners into place as this may cause damage.
- Your orthodontist will have issued Aligner "chewies" to assist with gradually seating aligners onto the teeth.

If you notice a sharp pain or have significant discomfort, discontinue using the aligners and contact your orthodontist immediately.

How should aligners be removed?

Removing aligners is easy, although it is important to maintain personal hygiene. Follow these steps for best results:

- Wash hands before handling aligners and handle only one aligner at a time.
- On one side of your mouth, use your fingertip on the inside of your back molar to slowly pull the aligner from the molars (back teeth).
- Repeat this process on the other side before completely removing the aligner.
- Once the aligner is disengaged from the molars on both sides of your mouth, slowly work your way forward and pry the aligner away from the teeth.

Other things to keep in mind when removing aligners:

- Immediately rinse the aligner with water, shake off excess water, and store aligners in their protective case.
- Avoid unnecessary removal of aligners to prevent damage.
- Take care when removing aligners, particularly if multiple attachments are being used.
- Do not use excessive force to bend or twist an aligner.
- Do not use any sharp object when removing.

If you experience any difficulties with the removal of aligners, be sure to consult your orthodontist. It's important you feel confident with this process as it will impact on treatment outcomes.

What's the best way to clean aligners?

Cleaning aligners can be integrated into your daily oral hygiene routine. Clean aligners using a soft toothbrush with water before inserting them into your mouth. Aligners should be rinsed with water after cleaning, and it is recommended aligner cleaning products are used once weekly or as needed. Remember to brush and floss teeth after each meal and prior to reinserting aligners to maintain oral hygiene.

What oral hygiene should I be aware of during Invisalign treatment?

Correct oral hygiene is a must during Invisalign treatment. Follow these oral hygiene essentials for the best results:

- Remove aligners before eating and drinking (with the exception of cold water).
- Brush and floss teeth after each meal or snack prior to reinserting aligners. If no cleaning system or toothbrush is available, simply rinse your mouth, and clean aligners by holding them under cool running water. Be sure to thoroughly clean aligners as soon as possible.
- Maintain regular dental check and cleans during treatment as this will help ensure your smile is not only straight, but healthy too!

If you have any questions regarding oral hygiene techniques, please consult with your orthodontic team.

Are there any food restrictions during Invisalign treatment?

Invisalign treatment provides great flexibility in terms of food. Most people can enjoy the same diet during treatment because aligners are removed while eating and drinking. This means there is no need to abstain from favourite foods or drinks unless advised by your orthodontist. Brushing and flossing after each meal and prior to reinserting aligners is highly recommended.

Will wearing aligners affect my speech?

As with all orthodontic treatments, Invisalign aligners may temporarily affect the speech of some people, however this is likely to last only a couple of days. As your tongue adjusts to the aligners, any effects caused by the aligners should disappear. For more information on how to overcome this issue, please contact your orthodontist to adapt more quickly to wearing aligners.

Can I drink alcohol while wearing aligners?

Aligners should be removed when consuming any food or beverage apart from water. Failing to remove aligners while drinking alcohol (or any sugary drinks) may cause staining and decay of teeth. Hot beverages will distort aligners.

Is Invisalign treatment painful?

While Invisalign treatment may move teeth without the pain and anxiety of other straightening methods, some people do 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, and is a sign the Invisalign aligners are moving teeth to their final positions. Discomfort usually passes within a couple of days after inserting the new aligner.

What should I do if my aligner is lost or broken?

If aligner is lost or broken, contact the practice as soon as possible. Depending on your circumstances, the orthodontist may recommend temporarily reverting to the previous stage while a replacement is made. For this reason, it may be helpful to keep the most recently used aligners as back up.

Will I need interproximal reduction?

As part of Invisalign treatment, some patients require a procedure known as interproximal reduction. With a view to creating the most ideal smile for you, the orthodontist 'polishes' sides of certain teeth to make more space between, allowing all teeth to move into place correctly.



IPR Strip



IPR (Interproximal Reduction)

My orthodontist mentioned retention. What is this?

Retention is an important part of every Invisalign treatment plan and is designed to help prevent your teeth from moving out of alignment again. Retention options include removable retainers which are similar to Invisalign aligners and can be worn to hold teeth in the desired position. Alternatively, fixed wires bonded to the lingual surface of teeth can be used. Your orthodontist will recommend the ideal retention for you.



Clear plastic retainer



Bonded lingual wire

For further information regarding appliance care, including Invisalign clear aligners, please refer to the Resources section of our website at <https://www.menaiortho.com.au/> or call us on (02) 9543 3680.