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Quality Affordable Orthodontic Care

## ORTHO 101

Modern orthodontic appliances are normally made of metal, plastic or ceramic materials. They can be removable or fixed (cemented/bonded) to the teeth. Braces work by Dr. Cohen placing a gentle, constant force in a carefully monitored manner to slowly move your teeth to the desired position. In the past a metal band with a bracket was placed around each tooth. Thanks to great orthodontic advances, new treatment methods are more efficient, affordable and aesthetic for you, the patient. People will hardly notice you are wearing them, and you'll find them to be more comfortable than ever.

An orthodontic appliance is a very precise, carefully engineered tooth-moving device made of tiny specialized parts. Dr. Cohen will guide your teeth into a correct position by adjusting the braces. To help understand what is happening during treatment, you should become familiar with the parts of your braces and some orthodontic terminology.

### Orthodontic Terms

#### Appliance

The components Dr. Cohen carefully attaches to your teeth, which cause your teeth to move, and causes changes to the shape of your jaws, thereby improving your bite and smile.

#### Archwire

The main wire that is shaped specifically to fit around your dental arch and into the bracket slots. The pressure from the archwire guides your teeth to move in the desired direction. It is adjusted or changed periodically during the treatment process as your teeth move and bite improves.

#### Band

A thin stainless steel metal ring that goes completely around and is cemented/glued to your tooth. The bands allow brackets to be attached to your teeth.

#### Banding

The actual fitting and cementing of orthodontic bands around your teeth.

#### Bonding

Attaching brackets directly to the surface of your teeth using special orthodontic bonding cement/glue.

#### Bracket

A metal or ceramic (clear) attachment that is secured to a tooth (either by bonding or banding) for the purpose of attaching an archwire.

#### Cephalometric X-ray

An x-ray of the head and jaws, which allows growth of your face, jaws and teeth to be analyzed.

#### Coil Spring

A spring placed on your archwire, between your brackets, to help open space between your teeth.

#### Crowding

A dental malocclusion (bad bite) with crooked teeth caused by inadequate space.

#### Debanding

Removing cemented orthodontic bands from your teeth.

**Debonding**

Removing bonded orthodontic brackets from your teeth.

**Gingiva**

The gum tissue that surrounds your teeth.

**Headgear**

An extra oral appliance inserted into brackets on your back teeth and attached around the back of your head that gently influences the growth of your face and jaws and moves your teeth.

**Hooks**

Small attachments on the brackets that are used to attach elastics (rubber bands).

**Impressions**

A model of your teeth taken by biting into a soft rubbery material that quickly sets to show an actual representation of your teeth.

**Mandibular**

Of or pertaining to your lower jaw. May be used to describe teeth, dental restorations, orthodontic appliances or facial structures.

**Maxillary**

Of or pertaining to your upper jaw. May be used to describe teeth, dental restorations, orthodontic appliances or facial structures.

**Mouthguard**

A mouthguard is recommended for patients who play sports with braces. It helps protect your teeth, jaws and smile, reducing the risk of breaking or knocking out your teeth.

**Orthodontist**

A dentist who has become a specialist by completing an advanced post-doctoral residency program, of at least two additional years, accredited by both the American Dental Association and the American Association of Orthodontists.

**Orthognathic Surgery**

Surgery to alter severe growth (skeletal) discrepancies between your jaw bones and your teeth, usually accomplished in conjunction with orthodontic therapy.

**Palatal Expander**

A special orthodontic appliance that helps to make your upper jaw wider.

**Panoramic X-ray**

An x-ray scan of your teeth and jaws.

**Retainer**

An appliance that is worn after your orthodontic treatment is completed and your braces are removed. The retainer holds your teeth in their new improved position and preserves your final results.

**Rubber Band (elastics)**

Rubber bands are hooked between different points on your braces to provide gentle pressure to move your teeth, improving your bite and smile.

**Spacer**

A small piece of rubber inserted between your back teeth to create space prior to fitting bands.

**Ties**

Either a thin metal wire (called a ligature) or a small rubber elastic “donut” (clear or in colors) that holds your main archwire in the brackets.

**Wax**

Wax is sometimes used to help keep your braces and wires from irritating your cheeks, lips or tongue.