

Bryn Mawr Orthodontics Adds Information and Treatment Planning for Surgical Orthodontics

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Bryn Mawr Orthodontics has expanded its orthodontic services and educational resources to include information about surgical orthodontics, an approach used in certain cases involving significant discrepancies between the teeth and jaws. Surgical orthodontic treatment may be considered when orthodontic appliances alone cannot adequately address an underlying skeletal or jaw-related concern.

Surgical orthodontics, also referred to as orthognathic surgery, generally involves coordination between an orthodontist and an oral and maxillofacial surgeon. Orthodontic treatment is used to position the teeth, while corrective jaw surgery can address the underlying relationship between the upper and lower jaws. The two parts of treatment are typically planned together because changes to the jaw can affect tooth position and the way the teeth fit together.

For patients researching surgical orthodontics Bryn Mawr, PA, it is important to understand that this type of treatment is not generally intended for routine orthodontic concerns. Traditional braces or clear aligners may be sufficient for many patients with problems involving tooth alignment. Surgical orthodontics may instead be considered for certain adults with significant skeletal discrepancies that affect the bite, jaw relationship, facial structure, or oral function.

Conditions that may lead to consideration of orthognathic surgery can include substantial overbites, underbites, open bites, crossbites, facial asymmetry, or differences in jaw size or position. In some cases, these issues can affect chewing, speech, or other aspects of oral function. The presence of a particular bite characteristic does not automatically mean surgery is necessary. A comprehensive evaluation is needed to determine the underlying cause and available treatment options.

Treatment planning for surgical orthodontics can be more involved than planning for conventional orthodontic treatment. The orthodontist and surgeon may evaluate dental records, X-rays, photographs, digital scans, and other diagnostic information. Three-dimensional imaging may also be used when appropriate to provide additional information about the jaws and surrounding structures.

Orthodontic treatment commonly takes place before and after jaw surgery. Before surgery, braces or another orthodontic appliance may be used to align the teeth in preparation for the planned change in jaw position. This stage can temporarily make the bite appear different because the teeth are being positioned according to the final surgical plan rather than simply being aligned based on their initial relationship.

The surgical portion is performed by an appropriately trained oral and maxillofacial surgeon. During orthognathic surgery, the jaw bones are repositioned according to the treatment plan. The exact procedure depends on the patient's anatomy and the nature of the skeletal discrepancy. Surgery may involve the upper jaw, lower jaw, or both.

Following surgery, orthodontic treatment generally continues while the bite settles into its planned relationship. The total treatment timeline varies significantly from patient to patient. Factors can include the complexity of the jaw discrepancy, the type of surgery performed, the patient's response to treatment, and the amount of orthodontic correction required.

Recovery is another important consideration. Patients undergoing jaw surgery can experience swelling, soreness, temporary changes in sensation, and dietary restrictions during the healing period. The surgical team provides specific instructions regarding oral hygiene, nutrition, physical activity, and follow-up appointments. Recovery experiences differ depending on the procedure and individual circumstances.

Patients considering surgical orthodontics Bryn Mawr, PA may also want to understand that treatment involves a significant commitment. Orthognathic surgery is different from routine orthodontic treatment because it involves a surgical procedure and a longer treatment-planning process. Patients should have an opportunity to discuss potential benefits, risks, alternatives, costs, recovery expectations, and the anticipated timeline before deciding whether to proceed.

Not every jaw discrepancy requires surgery. In some situations, orthodontic treatment alone may provide an acceptable result. In other cases, particularly when the underlying issue is skeletal rather than dental, orthodontic appliances may not be able to produce the desired functional correction on their own. An individualized evaluation helps determine which approach is appropriate.

Patient education can be particularly useful when considering complex orthodontic treatment. Understanding the difference between tooth movement and surgical jaw correction can help patients understand why multiple specialists may be involved and why treatment may occur in several stages.

Bryn Mawr Orthodontics provides educational information about orthodontic treatment and options for patients with different types of alignment and bite concerns. Patients who are interested in learning more

about surgical orthodontics can discuss their concerns with an orthodontic professional and determine whether a comprehensive evaluation is appropriate.

A consultation may include an examination of the teeth and bite, a review of the patient's dental and medical history, and diagnostic records when indicated. If surgical treatment appears appropriate, the orthodontic team can coordinate with an oral and maxillofacial surgeon to develop a treatment plan.

Surgical orthodontics is a specialized treatment approach and is not appropriate for every patient. The decision to pursue treatment should be based on the individual's anatomy, functional needs, oral health, treatment goals, and a thorough discussion of the available options. Patients considering jaw surgery can use educational resources to prepare questions and better understand what the treatment process may involve before making a decision.

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