



**invisalign**

Elite Invisalign providers  
Dr. Ken Cirka's and Dr. Jessica Meier's

# **COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO INVISALIGN**

215.568.6222  
1601 Walnut Street Suite 1302  
Philadelphia, PA 19102






Dear Patient,

**Congratulations on your decision to pursue improved oral health with the Invisalign appliance!**

Please read this booklet carefully and make sure to clarify any questions you have regarding your Invisalign treatment with our team.

Invisalign aligners are designed to straighten your teeth like conventional orthodontics, without metal braces. Invisalign treatment consists of a series of clear plastic aligners that you wear for the course of your treatment in order to move your teeth into the desired position. Dr. Cirka and Dr. Meier develop the aligners from the X-rays, scans, photographs, and an evaluation of your bite. The number of aligners and the length of time are determined by the treatment plan developed specifically for you. Straight, white teeth are only several months away! Meet Invisalign—the easiest and very common way for straight teeth in the shortest amount of time.



# WHAT TO EXPECT DURING YOUR INVISALIGN APPOINTMENTS

## **RECORDS APPOINTMENT – 50 minutes**

You will have detailed scan of your teeth and photographs taken. If you do not have a current full mouth X-ray on file, we will need to take a new one. Your next appointment will be in approximately 3 weeks. We will wait to schedule this appointment once we know when your case will be delivered back to our office.

## **FIRST APPOINTMENT – 60 minutes**

You will receive the final instructions about the wear and care of your aligners. We will then place your first set of aligners and teach you how to insert and remove them. These instructions are also included within this booklet. At this appointment, we will also place tooth-colored attachments on your teeth and begin to perform any IPR (inter-proximal reduction) -also known as slimming or slenderizing- that was discussed at your consultation.

## **MONITORING VISITS – 20-30 minutes**

We will have you come in every 6-8 weeks to receive your next set of aligners. You need to come with the current aligner set in your mouth. We will make sure your teeth are tracking or moving, as they should in the aligners. Any IPR (slenderizing) needed will be done and new aligners will be placed.



The number of monitoring appointments depends on the number of aligner sets that have been prescribed. Visits will continue until you have successfully completed all of your treatment. Following your final set, an evaluation is scheduled to determine if retainers can be ordered or if further refining is needed.

## **TREATMENT PROGRESS**

The most important variable for success of your Invisalign treatment is your compliance to wear the aligners as instructed.

Aligners need to be worn at minimum of 22 hours per day, without exception. Invisalign ONLY works when you are wearing them. The only time the aligners should be out of your mouth is when you are eating and drinking, brushing and flossing, or cleaning the aligners. Wear each aligner for a MINIMUM of two weeks, or as directed by the doctor. Even if it may seem that the current aligner is loose and no longer moving your teeth, it may take longer for the roots to catch up with the crown of the tooth.

If you miss some days for any reason, pick up where you left off and wear the aligners for a full 14 days MINIMUM. Also, call the office and let us know.

# INSERTION

Each aligner is stamped with a letter and a number (U for upper and L for lower, indicated on each aligner). The number corresponds to the number of the aligners in sequence.

Make sure you have the proper aligner in the proper number sequence as marked on each aligner.

When inserting, gently push the aligners over your front teeth. Then, apply pressure to the tops of the left and right molars until they snap into place. DO NOT bite your aligners into place.



Make sure each aligner is ALL THE WAY DOWN and fully seated. You should not see any space between the edge of the tooth and the edge of the aligner. If the aligner is not fully in place, the teeth will not move properly and the next aligner will be even further off. This can waste many weeks of treatment and even cause starting over with possible extra fees.

# REMOVAL

To remove the aligners, pull off equally on both sides of the back teeth first, and then gently lift off of the front teeth. Always rinse the aligners in cold water and store in the proper container. To prevent damage, avoid unnecessary removal. Do NOT use sharp objects to remove your aligners.

## CARE OF ALIGNERS

Clean your aligners prior to each insertion. You can use toothpaste and a toothbrush. Rinse under running water and brush until clean. Never use denture cleaner or soak in alcohol or bleach, as the aligners will be damaged, become cloudy and very visible when you wear them again. Never place aligners in boiling or hot water to clean them, as they will become distorted and not fit.

## STORING ALIGNERS

Always place the aligners in the cases provided. Never place aligners in napkins or any other case. Never place aligners in a pocket that can be sat on.

KEEP ALL PREVIOUS aligners in a Ziploc bag at home. If you accidentally lose an aligner, call us right away and wear the previous aligner if available. It is imperative that you are always wearing an aligner even if the current one becomes lost. There will be a charge for damaged, lost, or discarded aligners.

# ADDITIONAL ALIGNER NOTES



**Oral Hygiene:** Brush and floss normally with the aligners out. Try to brush after eating and before re-inserting the aligners. Large food particles may prevent proper insertion.

**Eating:** There are no food restrictions with Invisalign. However, aligners must ALWAYS be removed when eating.

**Drinking:** Except for cold or room temperature water, always remove aligners when drinking anything. Any fluid will get inside the aligners and be held against your teeth, possibly for hours, causing staining or damage to the teeth and aligners.





**DO NOT:** Chew gum or smoke while wearing aligners.

**REFINEMENT:** Refinement is expected in most cases in order to “fine tune” how the bite fits together. In most cases, the appearance of your smile will be satisfactory at this point. However, in order for it to last, it needs to function correctly.

The process includes sending new impressions or a scan and new photographs to Invisalign®. These will be used to create more sets of aligners in order to achieve the desired results.

Part of the refining process may involve an equilibration of your bite. Equilibration is the process of making small adjustments to the shapes of your back teeth in order to help them fit together better. This procedure may be completed prior to making your retainers or after the retainers are in place. Minor adjustments to the bite are expected and part treatment.

# RETAINERS

Once treatment is complete, we will order retainers. You will wear your retainers full time, like your Invisalign aligners for 6 weeks. After this time the retainers are then worn at night only – forever, or as long as you want your teeth to remain straight. We do recommend this, but most patients choose to wear retainers nightly for 9 months; then after 9 months, 2 nights a week to maintain the position of the teeth. Minimally, wear them 2 nights a week, ideally every night. Unfortunately, without retainer use it is possible for your teeth to move out of place again.

Your retainers will eventually wear out, which will result in them losing their ability to function properly, allowing your teeth to shift. You will need to replace your retainers when this occurs. Your first set of retainers is included with your Invisalign fee and should last about 1-4 years. We recommend you bring your retainers with you at each cleaning appointment for us to evaluate and clean them at no charge. If you feel your teeth are changing their position, call us so we can evaluate. New retainers can be made when necessary.

## YOUR INVISALIGN TREATMENT COSTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Your prescribed number of aligners.
- All routine monitoring visits every 6-8 weeks.
- Additional fine-tuning aligners.
- Minor bite equilibration or adjustment
- One full set of retainers (upper and lower).

# THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WILL REQUIRE AN ADDITIONAL FEE

**(and possibly a referral to a specialist):**

- Extra aligners ordered from Invisalign due to tearing or loss of aligners. (\$75 per aligner)
- Impressions taken for temporary aligners
- Extra aligners if due to noncompliance
- Change in original course of treatment – examples:
  - TMJ issues
  - Unpredictable jaw shifting
  - A patient chooses to change the treatment outcome to something other than what the doctor prescribed
  - Teeth not moving as anticipated
  - Any final restorative treatment to teeth
  - Unexpected urgent/emergent dental needs that arise (chipped, broken, fractured, aching teeth, etc.)
  - Significant adjustments to the bite with extra trays or reshaping the teeth

# NONCOMPLIANCE

If you habitually do not follow the treatment course given to you, the end result discussed cannot be guaranteed. Examples of noncompliance include:

1. Continual loss of aligners
2. Continual tearing/breaking of aligners
3. Not wearing your aligners for the specified amount of time
4. Not showing up for your appointments
5. Repeatedly canceling appointments
6. Wearing the wrong set of aligners



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **How many hours a day do I wear my aligners?**

They should be worn minimally 22 hours a day. You should only remove them to eat, and clean your teeth. All other times of the day and night they should be worn.

## **How long is each aligner worn?**

In order for the aligners to work properly each set needs to be worn for 22 hours/day for the number of days prescribed.

## **How do I clean my aligners?**

Each time you brush your teeth, take out the aligners and thoroughly brush the inside and outside of them with cool water. For most patients this is all that is needed to keep them clean.

It is important to keep your aligners clean because failure to do so can result in decay, gum problems, and/or bad breath. Other cleaning options are: 1 tablespoon white vinegar to 1 cup water and soak for 10 minutes then brush with toothbrush and toothpaste.

## **Can I eat or chew gum while wearing my aligners?**

No, you should remove your aligners to eat anything and avoid chewing gum. Eating in your aligners may cause them to tear or break.

## **Can I drink while wearing my aligners?**

It is recommended that you only drink clear cool liquids or water while wearing your aligners. Dark beverages (coffee, tea, red wine) may stain your aligners. Sugary and acidic beverages (Soda, Gatorade, Red Bull, orange juice etc.) should not be consumed while wearing aligners due to risk of erosion and/or causing cavities.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## **Is it normal for my teeth to hurt when I change aligners? What can I do?**

Yes, it is normal for you to have some discomfort on certain teeth. You may feel some discomfort for 1-2 days. Taking some over the counter pain medication (Ibuprofen, Advil, Tylenol, Aleve) as needed will minimize this discomfort.

## **What time of day should I begin wearing my next set of aligners?**

After wearing your current set of aligners for the specified time, the most ideal time to switch to your next set is shortly before bed. Brush, floss and rinse your mouth, then place the next set of aligners and then do not remove them until you are ready to eat or brush your teeth the next morning. Patients claim that this greatly reduces the discomfort with the movement of their teeth.

## **Can my aligners break or tear?**

Yes, aligners can break or tear. You need to be careful removing them from your mouth and do not eat with them in. Both actions can cause your aligners to tear or break. We will instruct you on the proper way to remove the aligners from your mouth.

## **What do I do if my aligner breaks, tears or is lost?**

If you lose or break your aligners during the course of treatment please call our office at (215)-568-6222. We will decide if you can move to the next set of aligners or if we need to reorder the set you lost. It may be necessary to have you back up to your previous aligner and wear it until a replacement aligner can be ordered. If it is determined that you cannot move to the next aligner, one will be ordered for you for a fee of \$75. Previous aligner should be kept in your red case and current one in the blue case. These will be provided to you when you get your first set of aligners.

### **What is interproximal reduction (IPR)?**

IPR (slenderizing) is a safe, quick and effective way of creating the necessary space between crowded teeth in order to align them. Using a series of polishing instruments we can remove very small pre-determined amounts of enamel between your teeth (where floss goes) so that the teeth have room to move into proper alignment. There is no discomfort with this process and is completed with only topical gel anesthetic placed on the gum.

### **What is the purpose of the attachments?**

Attachments are designed to retain aligners as well as aid in the specific type of movement needed to properly align your teeth. Attachments are bonded onto the outside of your teeth, tooth-colored and no anesthetic is needed to place them. At the end of your treatment they will be removed and the teeth smoothed and polished prior to having your retainers made. Because the attachments are temporarily bonded to the tooth, they can occasionally come off the tooth. This is of no urgent concern; we see you and reattach the attachment at your next visit.

### **What happens if I don't wear my aligners 22 hours a day for the number of days specified?**

Your treatment cannot work as set up if you do not commit to wearing your aligners as you are directed. The aligners need 150-300 hours each to move and settle your teeth (depending on the amount of the tooth movement) before the next set is worn. If you deviate from the treatment course, there may be an additional fee to complete the treatment.

### **Can I use an at-home bleaching kit in my aligners?**

Yes, at-home systems will whiten your teeth. As part of your Invisalign treatment with us, we give you bleach gel that you can put inside your aligners. This is a benefit of doing the treatment in our office as it is included at no additional fee. Other offices charge up to an additional \$350. You do not want to use any over-the-counter whitening gels as they can dry out your tooth and remove the surface of your teeth. This gel that we provide you is safe, effective and efficient at whitening your teeth. How long after treatment is completed do I have to modify or change my case? Once aligners are delivered, your case is open for 5 years (Invisalign Full Treatment) in which we can make adjustments. Adjustments due to teeth shifting after the retainers are made result in a fee of \$1,150. This would include a new scan and additional trays.

# DOCTOR KEN CIRKA, DMD



Dr. Cirka has owned and operated his own dental practice in Philadelphia for the past 20 years. His gentle demeanor in the office has translated into strong loyalty with both patients and staff. Patients have repeatedly told him on multiple review websites like Dr.Oogle and Yelp that their visits to his office have been the best dental visits of their adult lives.

Dr. Cirka treats his patients to the highest quality of preventive, restorative and cosmetic dentistry in the gentlest manner possible. He has high standards and expectations of his staff, and each of his four hygienists also go above and beyond in providing patients with the most gentle and thorough cleanings using the newest and best materials. Whether you need implants to replace missing teeth, veneers to improve your smile, or a general check-up, Dr. Cirka and his team's expertise and experience will lead you to health.

Before embarking on his professional career, he was born and raised in a small town near Pittsburgh, PA. After being accepted to the University of Pennsylvania dental school, he moved to Philadelphia where he has spent the past 21 years. He enjoys learning new dental techniques and has traveled to Germany, Africa, and throughout the U.S. to further his education.

When not in the office, you can find him at home in Center City, at the gym, or renovating his home. He enjoys teaching other dentists how to love what they do, promoting healthy living, and giving to local and national charities, specifically the Muscular Dystrophy Association and the American Cancer Society, both of which have affected his family.

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