

Dangers of DIY Orthodontics - Just Say No!

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We have seen a vast number of do-it-yourself or DIY aligner companies sprout up over the years, each seemingly conveying this faux lifestyle of ease and satisfaction and comfort that you can't get elsewhere. You've seen the commercials, claiming you don't need an orthodontist and how easy it is to do on your own. So where are they now? What happened to all of these companies like smile direct club amongst others claiming to be the new wave of orthodontics?

As these same companies sift through tons of lawsuits over destroying smiles, compromising teeth, wasting your time with poor results, we as orthodontists sit here saying to ourselves, "when will this nonsense end?" There is a time and place for DIY which might include painting a room in your house, or snaking the shower drain, or even setting up your own WIFI, but not when it comes to healthcare, which includes your dental health. Can you imagine doing your own filling, or root canal, or extraction? Then how could you understand the biomechanics of tooth movement and the intricacies involved in safely getting that severely crowded lower incisor into alignment on your own?

As a nationally recognized board-certified orthodontist and published researcher, take it from me, there is A LOT that goes into orthodontic tooth movement whether we are talking braces or clear aligners/Invisalign. At Bancroft Dobrin Orthodontics, our doctors customize every single treatment plan for our patients because you are not just a number in the queue like with these DIY aligner companies, you are an individual who requires an individualized plan based upon every single detail related to your teeth, gums, and bone, and well as your overall smile. Make sure you seek out an orthodontist who pays attention to these details like we do, assessing the 3D scan that we take (which is insanely accurate compared to the old goopy impressions, and much more comfortable!), your x-rays, clinical photos, and most importantly your concerns. We can draw up simulations to show you our expectations on our state-of-the-art scanners as we virtually manipulate every single tooth to their ideal positions in a safe manner. Truth is, you should make sure your doctor is this hands-on as well and not reliant upon the technician on the other side to provide the result you need. Just taking a 3D scan and sending it in doesn't mean the same as assessing and virtually moving the teeth as they should be moved. Come in and see for yourself, all of our patients agree that it is mind-blowing to see!

We also follow up with you closely to make sure all teeth are tracking within the system and make customized changes if we encounter any resistance from one of the teeth. Stick with a trained professional; in the short AND long term you will thank your lucky stars you did!

How can any of this compare to a company portraying this grand lifestyle where you have to take your own impression (I imagine it would be hard enough for me to take my own impression without choking, let alone a non-dentist or orthodontist)? How about taking clear enough photos depicting the smallest details of your teeth which are of supreme importance? And what about x-rays to check on roots of teeth, if you have any fillings, crowns, root canals - who's providing those? Those teeth move differently and must be paid attention to, so how could some technician on the other side of a computer possibly know any of it? And their grand marketing scheme to attract a patient away from the trusted specialist is "for half as much as being treated by an

orthodontist.” This isn’t as much about access to care as it is about safety and longevity of your smile and functional dental health. If finances are a concern, we are flexible and can make it easy for you! I can’t tell you how many times we have seen patients over the years waste money on these gimmicks just to come to us requiring comprehensive treatment that we could’ve done in a faster time, with incredible results, for a competitive fee! So looking back, what did it actually save you? Not time. Not money. Not comfort. I assure you of it.

I don’t mean to stand atop my soapbox here because these companies really are not my competitors, but the general public needs to understand the risks surrounding these vast marketing campaigns with little actual substance behind them.

You may ask, well how can I expect to be treated safely during times like a worldwide pandemic? I will start by saying this - our clear aligner patients have THRIVED throughout the pandemic because their treatment was uninterrupted. The plans were in place and the adjustments were completed in advance, all we had to do was check in and make sure our patients were following the instructions and that things looked good. For your peace of mind, we take all of the necessary safety precautions and more to provide outstanding orthodontic care in a clean and safe environment, and this has always been the case, pandemic or not. Take comfort in knowing that stepping into our office you will feel protected.

After hearing all of this, I hope that you know where you can go for safe, comfortable, and predictable orthodontic treatment. And for all of the things I guarantee you can learn to do by yourself, please don’t make orthodontics one of them, leave that to us!