

“The 9 Things You Must Know Before Choosing Your Family’s Orthodontist”

Okay, okay, I know, it says nine. But here are sixteen. Consider the extra 7 a bonus— it’s all information that can help you choose your orthodontist.

1. Orthodontics today can do far more than just straighten teeth. Sculpting a beautiful smile requires an enormous attention to details that goes far beyond tooth alignment. My passion is not to simply straighten teeth, but rather to create a smile which increases confidence, self-esteem, attractiveness, happiness, and even fun for children and adults. I truly believe my orthodontic treatment creates life-long advantages and opportunities for my patients.
2. You enjoy many additional benefits and added peace of mind when you entrust your family’s orthodontic care only to a licensed orthodontic specialist. In some instances today, in our economic climate, general dentists are performing orthodontic procedures that are better left to an orthodontic specialist who has the experience and comprehensive orthodontic training to ensure favorable results. Just because a general dentist does orthodontic procedures, such as Invisalign®, or even braces, does not mean you should entrust your family’s orthodontic care to them.
3. Dr. Pearson has personally treated over 5,000 children and adults since opening his practice in Staten Island over 25 years ago. Many of our patients travel long distances to seek our services. Area dentists refer their patients to Dr. Pearson for his expert opinion on difficult cases and bring their own children to see us.
4. Did you know that legislation has been introduced in parts of the United States preventing dentists from advertising to the public that they are dental specialists if they have not completed the education for that dental specialty as defined by the American Dental Association? In some areas of the country, this has become common for general dentists to claim they are proficient at orthodontic procedures. It is legal for general dentists to perform orthodontic procedures, but they are not licensed specialists. This may sound like a fine line, but it really isn’t. It’s like playing baseball or being in the major leagues.

Protecting the public from individuals claiming expertise that they don’t really possess has driven this legislation, said Dr. Mark Blaisdell, immediate past president of the Utah Dental Association. “When the public cannot determine who is treating them, then there is a problem...The public needs to have a clear understanding.”

After graduating from New York University School of Dentistry, Dr. Pearson completed his orthodontic training as a specialist in orthodontics at Columbia University Dental School.

5. The American Association of Orthodontists recommends that all children should have an orthodontic evaluation by age 7. An experienced orthodontist can clearly see by age seven whether developmental issues can turn into problems. Early detection of common orthodontic problems such as crowding, premature loss of baby teeth, cross bites, or many other unfavorable developmental issues can lead to the implementation of the most appropriate treatment, that can result in a shorter course of therapy, and is less painful for the patient.

Frequently, no early intervention will be necessary, except careful monitoring of your child's dental development. This will give you peace of mind when it is not clear to you whether an issue you see is really a problem or just a stage of development that doesn't require intervention.

6. At the time of their initial orthodontic evaluation, many children will not benefit from early orthodontic intervention, yet will benefit when they are older. Dr. Pearson places many children on a suitably timed observation program to monitor their development and begin orthodontic treatment later. **Rest assured that Dr. Pearson will wait until treatment should be started to make the treatment as quick, simple, comfortable, and inexpensive as possible. Unfortunately, in our area, not all practices share this viewpoint.**

Make your orthodontic experience as simple as possible. Ask what your child gains, in-the-long-run, from doing something right now; especially with early treatment. Only accept a detailed and convincing explanation. If you still wonder, seek another opinion.

7. Although orthodontic treatment is possible at any age, there is an ideal time when the most conservative techniques will produce the best results. And the orthodontist is specifically trained to determine this ideal time. Skeletal (jaw size) discrepancy treatment must be initiated while there is enough growth remaining, otherwise, compromises and compensations will be needed. Crowding is usually a result of narrow jaws and early orthopedic expansion can create more room for tooth alignment and a broader smile. Expansion has to be started at the right time and will not be successful if initiated too late. This is why early evaluation is advised.
8. Dr. Pearson makes orthodontic care affordable for your family. We offer complimentary initial orthodontic clinical exams. In addition, if Dr. Pearson recommends treatment at the time of your initial visit, we offer many options to make treatment affordable. We tailor a payment plan to fit you. It's not a one-size-fits-all formula, which may work seriously to your disadvantage if you have a responsible credit history. Also, our fees are always competitive in our area. In addition, we accept Visa, Mastercard, and Discover.
9. Our practice accepts insurance assignment and we are experts at working with your plan to ensure you receive the maximum benefit available. Why accept anything less which requires much more out of pocket cash from you, while you wait for the reimbursement from your insurance? On average, our patients with insurance coverage have about 35 percent of their orthodontic costs covered by insurance. Some have much more. We gladly assist our patients with their Flex Spending Account dollars to ensure that they plan in advance to maximize their benefit. It's about service to you and doing what's right.
10. Orthodontists are experts in dental and facial development. An orthodontist is a dental specialist, who after graduating from dental school, completes additional full-time university-based education in an accredited orthodontic residency program supervised by orthodontic experts. Specialty training requires 2-3 additional academic years and admission is extremely competitive. Mastering the physics of tooth movement and understanding the biology of facial development and guidance, orthodontists are the specifically educated experts in dentistry to straighten teeth and align jaws.

Orthodontists limit their practices to orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics. This means that orthodontic treatment is what they do, and all they do. Selecting an orthodontist who is a member of the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) is your assurance that you have chosen an orthodontist: the dental specialist with at least 2-3 years of advanced specialty education in orthodontics in a university-based program accredited by the American Dental Association.*

* American Association of Orthodontists website - www.braces.org.

11. To seek treatment from an orthodontic specialist, you do not need to be referred by a general dentist. In fact, 50 percent of patients that are treated by Dr. Pearson are not referred by a general dentist. These patients come to us because of the recommendation of their friends and family, regarding their experience with Dr. Pearson and his reputation for personalized care.

12. Due to the many technological advances available today in the field of orthodontics, such as Invisalign® and self-ligating brackets, to name several, many patients are enjoying significantly shorter treatment times. 30 percent of Dr. Pearson's patients cases are completed in just 12-18 months. In addition, there is absolutely no disadvantage, whatsoever, to time-efficient treatment. A myth, often perpetuated in general dental offices, is that rapid treatment is harmful to the teeth and gums. This is utterly false and without any scientific merit.

In all fairness though, treatment times vary based on each individual situation as well as the patient's response to therapy and personal dedication to their course of treatment. There is a lot that Dr. Pearson does to reduce each individual's length of treatment. Unfortunately, it is not always obvious to an individual just how reduced their time in treatment was, compared to what it could have been just down the street.

13. Orthodontic treatment is not just for children any longer! In fact, 25 percent of the patients treated by Dr. Pearson are adults. Many of our adult patients are finding out now how a healthy, attractive smile can enhance their careers, as well as their self-esteem and happiness. And, treatment time can be greatly reduced as well.

Even though you may not have gotten braces when you were young, why deprive yourself any longer of the many benefits of expert orthodontic treatment? In fact, several new procedures available today, such as Invisalign®, are much more convenient for a busy adult's schedule, and so invisible you'll be the only one that knows!

14. A beautiful smile is a long-term commitment with active treatment, and even more importantly, reasonable and effective retention. Not all retainers are created equal and not all methods of handling retention are the same. Why spend thousands of dollars creating the best result, only to lose it with unreasonable retention protocols? With Dr. Pearson, your retainers are placed before you leave the office, the day the braces come off. The vast majority of practices will have you wait for several days after the braces are removed, sometimes even more than a week, before placing retainers. This practice is a near guarantee for losing the alignment you paid for.

Dr. Pearson has established a reputation of orthodontic excellence in Staten Island for over 25 years. We can explain why there is a much better way and how we gear long-term alignment to you and your personal needs, choice and responsibility.

15. Dr. Pearson offers complimentary initial orthodontic clinical exams. In addition, our practice is convenient for our patients. We recognize that time away from school and work is a concern to you. We offer early morning and evening appointments.

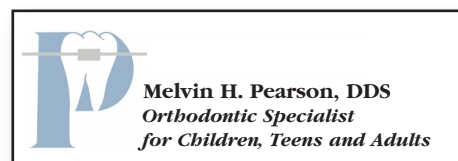
16. There are many, many details that go into selecting an orthodontic office. Look closely at the details. Ask yourself:

- **Who addresses the details for you both professionally and in support service?**
- **What is the atmosphere you sense when visiting the office?**
- **Were you treated the way you would choose to be treated?**
- **Did you walk away understanding the process?**

We are very confident about what you will discover, and we encourage you to find out for yourself.

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