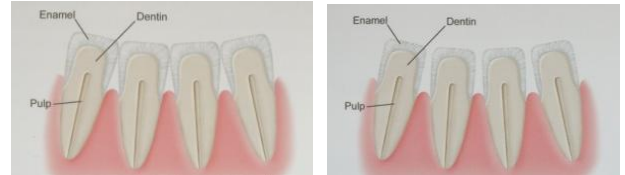


Interproximal Reduction

Your orthodontist is considering carrying out a procedure on your teeth called “**Interproximal Reduction**” (IPR) – also known as slenderising or enamel reproximation.

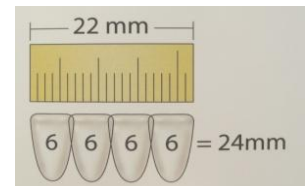
What is interproximal reduction?

Interproximal reduction is the mechanical removal of some of the outer tooth surface, called enamel, between teeth. It is possible to reduce the width of certain teeth by up to ½ mm. The space created by interdental reduction can then be used to straighten the teeth.



Why do I need interproximal reduction?

Your orthodontist needs to gain enough space in order to straighten your teeth and improve your bite. If the space required is small, then it can be achieved by interproximal reduction of several teeth. This could avoid the need for extracting teeth. It may also be done to reshape teeth.



How is it done?

The enamel is removed using either:

- a fine dental disc, or
- by hand with an abrasive strip (file)



How long does it take?

Interproximal reduction takes only a few minutes and can be done in a single visit or spread over several visits.

Does it hurt?

No. Enamel is the material that makes up the outer shell of our teeth. It does not contain any nerves so no discomfort is felt. As only a very thin layer (0.2 – 0.5mm) of enamel is removed, no anaesthetic is required.



Are my teeth more likely to decay if enamel is removed?

No. The orthodontist will only remove the minimum amount of enamel required to get your teeth straight. Each tooth will be left with enough enamel to continue to remain healthy and sound. Studies have shown that decay rates of teeth that have had interproximal reduction are no higher than normal teeth. Your orthodontist may coat the teeth in a temporary fluoride varnish after the procedure to help the enamel “repair” itself. You may also be advised to use an alcohol-free fluoride mouthrinse to help keep the enamel strong.

Will my teeth be painful?

No. Some patients, however, may experience some temporary sensitivity to hot or cold foods and drinks but this usually returns to normal within a few days.

Will it give me gum disease?

No. The procedure does not increase the risk of gum disease. It is important to keep your teeth and gums clean and healthy throughout your orthodontic treatment.

Possible risks:

*Plaque can collect more readily on teeth, that have undergone interproximal reduction, if the tooth surface is NOT smoothed and polished by the orthodontist.

Benefits:

* no extraction of permanent teeth
* tooth shape may be better
* bite may be improved

If you have any further questions please discuss them at your next appointment.

Orthodontics for Children and Adults

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