

# Clear aligners: patient and practitioner benefits

CLINICAL  
TIPS

**Nishan Dixit** sings the praises of the technology putting accessible, effective and predictable orthodontics in the hands of GDPs

**Dr Nishan Dixit BDS LDS RCS (Eng)**

Past president of the BACD



Most dental professionals are familiar with this story... Once upon a time, the only treatment option for people seeking a straighter smile was a fixed appliance.

This was highly unpopular among many patients, who would instead choose dental veneers as a 'quick fix' for misaligned, crooked or crowded teeth. However, placing traditional veneers involved destroying a lot of healthy tooth tissue – a highly invasive approach that many clinicians now try to avoid.

Thankfully, advances in dental technology, materials and techniques mean that we are now able to offer clear aligners to many patients.

These orthodontic appliances offer an effective, time-sensitive and predictable means to align teeth, with one benefit being to make oral hygiene easier for patients to perform, thus leading to reduced risk of disease and improved oral health.



Moreover, the transparent and removable nature of clear aligners makes them incredibly discreet, which can help improve patient compliance with orthodontic treatment.

## Minimally invasive workflow

For clinicians, clear aligners provide significant advantages in terms of enabling more minimally invasive workflows. If a patient's teeth are crowded, for instance, clear aligners can be used to move the teeth into a better position so that much less healthy

tooth tissue needs to be destroyed for restorative work.

This approach is commonly employed before placing minimal prep veneers to achieve a highly aesthetic restorative outcome.

In cases where patients have a constricted envelope of function, clear aligners also enable you to correctly align the teeth to prevent future damage by tooth wear.

Additionally, clear aligners can be used to ensure better angulation or alignment of the teeth in order to facilitate optimal placement of a dental implant, for example.

## Extend your offerings

Clear aligners can ultimately expand treatment options and broaden a dentist's capacity to help patients. Whether used to achieve aesthetic goals, functional ones or a combination of both, clear aligners are undoubtedly ensconced within the profession as an essential solution that promotes minimal intervention.

If you're not already offering them, seize your chance now and experience the benefits of providing less invasive dentistry to your patients. **D**