

Assumptions: What You Should Know and Understand Before You Use this Book



As a reader of this book, it is only fair that you know what you are getting as the remit is certainly not to teach orthodontics! It concentrates on discussing the practical aspects of only two, relatively discreet, but important aspects of orthodontics:

- **Interceptive treatment** deals with the developing, childhood dentition at a time when decisions can strongly influence long-term outcomes. Identifying and explaining the principles of interception are among the learning outcomes identified by the General Dental Council.
- **Retention** is an increasingly important part of orthodontic treatment for many patients. More and more, patients may wish to maintain (for as long as feasible) their treatment result following what may often have been lengthy and complex treatment. It is thus likely that general dental practitioners will need to take over the care and responsibility for their patients' retainer requirements. Incidentally, however, it should be noted

that whilst upper removable appliances (URAs) are appropriate for childhood interceptive treatment, they are not often useful for adults. In contrast, retainers may be worn by children or adults.

This book will also give pertinent advice on:

- **What makes a good referral letter** (again in line with the General Dental Council outcomes), e.g. when a patient requires referral to a specialist for definitive orthodontic treatment.
- **What is required when and the reasons for taking over the care and responsibility of a patient's retainer requirements.**

In addition, discussion of lower removable appliances (LRAs) is included where appropriate, as well as specific chapters for the specialist trainee.

The authors acknowledge that the practical advice given in this book will sometimes not exactly match that given by every clinician, but

subtle differences in approach are evident between clinicians in all specialties. The approach adopted here is one that we have found works for us. Furthermore, as this is essentially a practical guide based on clinical experience, it is not written nor intended as a fully-referenced academic text.

So, this book assumes a basic level of orthodontic knowledge of the sort you would hopefully receive from an undergraduate dental training. This means that it does not explain terms such as overjet, overbite, the different skeletal, incisor or molar classifications, etc. – it will assume you know these already. It will also not explain how to undertake an orthodontic diagnosis, only pointing out aspects of diagnosis that are relevant to the particular problem under discussion.

Also this book will not explain how to undertake all orthodontic treatment. That is a specialist area. However, what this book will do is give guidance on situations where interceptive treatment could potentially be considered and how. Yet, this can never be comprehensive since no two patients are ever entirely identical. Many aspects of diagnosis can influence a decision as to whether a treatment is reasonable, possible or even feasible.

In addition, this book does not discuss issues of consent, risks of orthodontic treatment and balancing the risk/benefit ratio. These are all vital issues, but again we assume a level of knowledge that basic undergraduate dental training should cover.

Lastly and obviously, this book provides no direct practical experience whatsoever!