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Samantha's Invisalign

Published: 09 July 2011



Samantha*, 54

PROCEDURE: Invisalign

PERFORMED BY: Dr. Brian Friedman, DDS

*Patient name has been changed

Elevate: What prompted you to have Invisalign done?

Samantha: "A combination of things. Initially I considered doing it for cosmetic purposes – I wanted my teeth to be straighter – but that didn't seem like reason enough to follow through. What eventually sold me on the procedure was the fact that I had a hard time cleaning my front, overlapping teeth, and once Dr. Friedman informed me that reducing my overlap and straightening my teeth would help with cleaning, it was enough to convince me to get the procedure done."

Elevate: How did you choose your doctor?

Samantha: "Dr. Friedman is my husband's dentist. When I first thought about getting my teeth fixed but still wasn't ready to commit, my husband suggested I call Dr. Friedman, but the time wasn't right. When I got serious about having braces again, I decided to go in for a consultation and immediately knew he was the dentist for me."

Elevate: What was the experience like?

Samantha: "It's been so easy. I had metal braces when I was a child and can remember how bothersome they were to deal with, but wearing these aligners is such a different experience. They're smooth, I can take them out when I eat, and I can clean my teeth well at any time of the day without worrying about contending with wires or elastics. I also really like that the aligners don't feel tight all the time. They're snug initially, but become comfortable not long after you start wearing them."

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Elevate: What kind of results did you see?

Samantha: "Beyond my smile looking symmetrical now, my teeth feel so much better and my upper lip has been nicely shaped as a result – it's pushed out ever so slightly now. Seeing the final outcome makes me wish I'd done it sooner."

Ask the Doctor

Dr. Brian Friedman, DDS

Dr. Brian Friedman, Toronto, drbrianfriedman.ca

Elevate: What is Invisalign?

DR. FRIEDMAN: "It's a teeth-straightening system that uses invisible, removable aligners that no one can tell you're wearing. You wear each aligner for approximately two weeks – you can remove them to eat, drink, brush and floss – and with each new aligner in the series, your teeth shift slightly week by week until they reach the desired position."

Elevate: What does it involve?

DR. FRIEDMAN: "At the first appointment, records, photos, impressions and X-rays are taken to assess the patient's mouth and his or her overall needs. That information is sent off to Invisalign, and from there they send back an animation of what the patient's teeth look like now, and what they'll look like at the end of the process. We discuss whether the projected outcome is agreeable to the patient and if so, computer-generated aligners are sent and the experience begins. If the patient has an issue with the projected outcome, we modify the treatment plan to make sure they're happy before moving ahead."

Elevate: How long will a patient typically wear aligners?

DR. FRIEDMAN: "The time ranges depending on the person, but typically between nine to 15 months. The average amount of aligners worn during this time is between 18 to 30, but, again, varies individually."

Elevate: Are there guidelines on things to do/not do when wearing aligners?

DR. FRIEDMAN: "Patients should always leave aligners in, except to eat and clean their teeth. They should also avoid drinking sweetened beverages since sugars could get trapped in the liners and lead to cavities, and they should always sleep with the liners on. Invisalign suggests that they be worn for a minimum of 22 hours a day for best results."

Elevate: What's the average cost of Invisalign?

DR. FRIEDMAN: "For a general dentist, prices range between \$5,000 to \$6,000."

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