

*A beautiful smile  
is something to be  
treasured.*



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*Interproximal Reduction*

## *Interproximal Reduction*

### *What is interproximal reduction?*

Enamel interproximal stripping is the removal of the small amounts of enamel between the teeth.

Approximately 0.5mm can be removed on each tooth WITHOUT COMPROMISING the health of the tooth.

### *Why do I need interproximal reduction?*

In addition to creating the space, the process has been advocated for improving the shape and the contact points of teeth, and possibly enhancing stability at the end of the treatment.

This could avoid the need for extracting teeth in borderline extraction cases.

### *How is it done?*

The enamel is removed by using either a fine dental bur or by hand with an abrasive strip-see picture.

### *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.

### *Is it uncomfortable?*

No. Enamel is the material that makes up the outer shell of our teeth. It does not contain any nerves or blood vessels so there is no discomfort. As only a very thin layer of enamel is removed, no anesthetic 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 the decay rates of teeth that have had inter-proximal reduction are no higher than normal teeth.



### *Will my teeth feel any different?*

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 make your teeth more at risk to gum disease.

### *What are the possible risks of interproximal reduction?*

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