



Jason Craighead

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Invisalign®: Digital Wonder



Dr. Andraeus

percent of my patients who can benefit from orthodontic work. With regular orthodontic braces, it's possible to move a tooth as much as a quarter of a millimeter every two weeks—and that adjustment needs to be done by the dentist or orthodontist. Invisalign, quite differently, is programmed by computer to make exact incremental movements of a quarter of a millimeter every two weeks.

"Because it does not rely on the use of metal or ceramic brackets and wires, Invisalign significantly reduces the poor aesthetics and other limitations associated with braces," says Dr. Andraeus. "Instead, Invisalign utilizes advances in 3-D imaging technology to create a series of customized plastic aligners. Patients simply wear each aligner for a few weeks, removing them only to eat, brush, and floss. After use of as few as 12 or as many as 48 nearly invisible aligners, the procedure is done. The results are consistently wonderful. Patients typically finish the process in a year or less.

"Invisalign is increasingly beneficial in my cosmetic and aesthetic work. For some patients, as a result of this new product, we don't need to restore a tooth. Invisalign allows me to take care of their wishes in an aesthetic fashion even as we're straightening their teeth orthodontically. The beauty of the procedure, in addition to the fact that it is precise and quick, is that it really is virtually invisible to see. And we can whiten teeth even as we straighten them with Invisalign.

"Using Invisalign permits me to save tooth structure, and it allows me in many instances to correct gum heights as desired. By moving a tooth forward, we can actually raise the gum height, and if we push

the tooth back it can lower gum height on the tooth. I find it effective in correcting gapped teeth, overbite, underbite, open bite, overly crowded teeth, and cross-bite.

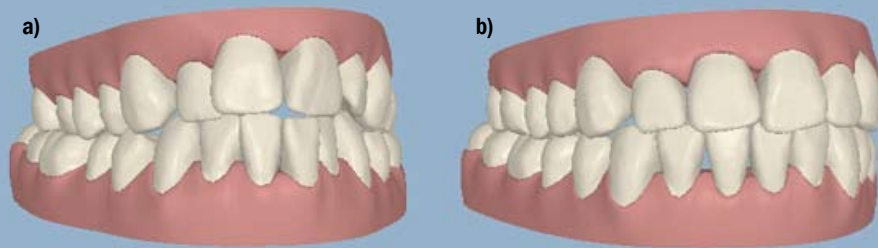
"Invisalign is also working well for many patients in their early teens. Once 12-year molars have erupted, or nearly so, youngsters may be good candidates for Invisalign.

"We worked with a young man who was 13 when we began the process, and when we looked at his

digital models it seemed beyond possibility that Invisalign could be an effective approach. He had several teeth that were heavily inclined toward the tongue, and they had to be completely uprighted—because they were in a false bite. And there was obvious crowding with teeth canted over each other. It was one of the most difficult Invisalign cases I had done to that point—but I had been under-estimating Invisalign capabilities.

"This patient had been to two orthodontists, and each had recommended wires and brackets with estimates of two years or more to complete the corrective work. We finished with this young man in a year, with a terrific outcome.

"A key issue is compliance. When it comes to Invisalign, the simple fact is the aligners work only if you wear them as prescribed. Parents and practitioner have to make the decision about the likelihood of compliance from their child. When teens consider the benefits of Invisalign, they typically get invested in success. Invisalign aligners are virtually invisible, removable, eliminate the need for metal or braces in the mouth, and allow patients to brush and floss normally during treatment." *h&h*



Invisalign images for Jason Craighead, a) as the process began, and b) after completing use of 19 of 29 aligners

Jason Craighead, often called one of the leading abstract expressionist painters in the Southeast, was in these pages several years ago when he was featured in Gallery A (see box), the display of the work of local artists incorporated into Dr. Steven Andraeus's dental practice.

Now the gifted young artist is making a return visit here as an Invisalign® patient.

"I first began seeing Dr. Andraeus as my dentist last April, and to be perfectly honest, it was the first time I had been to a dentist in nearly 20 years! I didn't stay away because of fear—but seeing the dentist was just something I didn't do.

"Needless to say, I required a lot of attention to regain oral health, including a thorough periodontal treatment. I had my wisdom teeth removed to help relieve crowding of my teeth. My goal was pretty simple. I believe that a healthy mouth contributes to a healthier life. And that's easier to do when the teeth are clean, cared for, and not all jammed together.

"From this work I moved right into the Invisalign® process to straighten my teeth, and I'm now on tray 19 of my aligners of 29 trays I'll need to complete the process. I'll finish in May. I've lived my whole life with my bottom teeth really crowded in the front, and now they are virtually perfect. When I look in the mirror now I still go 'Whoa...' I've never seen my teeth look like that. Before, if I bit into an apple, I'd

see my bite imprint, with a jagged look I'd recognize as my teeth. Now it's dramatically different, and just about perfect."

DIGITAL MIRACLE

Dr. Andraeus, a master of many aesthetic tools, is one of about 450 dentists nationally who have earned accreditation from the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry.

He is also a preferred provider and an enthusiastic supporter of Invisalign, identified by the company as among "a select group of doctors who have achieved the highest level of Invisalign expertise."

"Invisalign," Notes Dr. Andraeus, "is in the forefront for creative use of digital technology. It is a great choice for about 80

ON THE WALLS AT GALLERY A

Dr. Andraeus' love of art expresses itself in his cosmetic-aesthetic work (he is also a talented artist and photographer) and in Gallery A within his practice, with its walls regularly adorned with the work of emerging local artists. Now showing: "Fiction is Obligated to Stick . . ." new work by Sean Marlin, who is known by many as a driving force in the downtown Raleigh art scene. More information: angie@gallerya-nc.com.



For more information on dental cosmetic procedures, or on helping to support the "Give Back a Smile" program (which provides free cosmetic dental care to survivors of domestic violence), contact:

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