

building beautiful smiles

BY KATE AENLLE

LIFESTYLE DISCOVERS THE CLEARER WAY TO STRAIGHTER TEETH

Invisalign has made a splash in the field of dentistry and orthodontics. We sat down with one of British Columbia's top orthodontists and Invisalign providers, Dr. Aly Kanani, to discuss Invisalign and how it's clearly reshaping smiles around the world.

Q: I've heard that you are in the top 1% of orthodontists in North America for Invisalign treatment. To what do you attribute your success?

AK: My success with Invisalign stems from my training as a certified specialist in orthodontics. Additional years of schooling beyond dental school were the foundation in learning to correctly diagnose one's bite and teeth relationships, understanding the growth and development of the jaws, and the biology underlying tooth movements.

With respect to Invisalign in particular, individual patient circumstances, critical case selection, and years of experience treating hundreds of Invisalign patients are what have made us a popular choice among those living in the Lower Mainland for their orthodontic needs.

Q: Briefly describe the capabilities of Invisalign versus traditional braces.

AK: Invisalign and braces are both capable of correcting misalignments in about the same amount of time. Sometimes the Invisalign one is faster, as it depends on the individual patient's circumstances. Invisalign is a technique, and like every technique the skill set of the orthodontist determines the technique's outcome. The more experienced the doctor, the better the treatment outcome.

Q: How exactly does Invisalign work?

AK: The patient would first visit one of our offices to personally meet with myself and our orthodontic team for a consultation. After a thorough examination and understanding of the client's needs and desires for an attractive smile, orthodontic records of their teeth

are taken (moulds of their teeth as well as digital photographs and digital x-rays). These orthodontic records are studied in detail by either me or our other orthodontic specialists, and after careful evaluation, we submit these materials to Align Technology with a detailed treatment plan.

At Align Technology, a computer model is created from the moulds of the patient's teeth. 3-D imaging software generates a graphical representation of our treatment plan. Treatment plans take into account tooth crowding, tooth spacing, the "overbite," any "deep bites," missing teeth, the quality and quantity of the bones and gum tissues supporting the teeth, among other important factors that will impact the success of the treatment. After some revisions, custom aligners are fabricated for our patient.

The patient wears each stage of aligners for approximately two weeks before switching to the next set.

Q: I understand that dentists or orthodontists need special training to become a certified Invisalign provider. Exactly how much schooling is required?

AK: All practicing dentists and orthodontists may become Invisalign

Certified Providers or Invisalign Preferred Providers, assuming that they complete the certification process. However, using the Invisalign technique and knowing when and how to appropriately use the technique takes several years of experience. As orthodontic specialists, we are fortunate to be able to give our clients numerous options to address their smile concerns including of course Invisalign, but also clear cosmetic braces, traditional braces, and combination treatments using the above for the patients' maximum advantage.

Q: It's obvious you are passionate about this technology. What makes you regard Invisalign so highly?

AK: Invisalign really has taken orthodontics to a new level. Traditional braces are a great, reliable treatment, but the new aligner technology allows us to expand the way we treat patients with less discomfort, better oral hygiene and a removable aligner that my patients really love. And, best of all, no one will know you're wearing them. Invisalign has allowed teenagers and adults who otherwise may not have straightened their teeth or addressed their bad bites with more traditional braces, a "clearer" option that they are more comfortable with.

Q: Will Invisalign render braces obsolete?

AK: No. Invisalign is great; however it is not for everyone. Every patient's situation and expectations are different. These concerns and options are best addressed in person during a consultation with either me or other members of our team. However, we have successfully treated a wide variety of patients who had been previously told that they were not candidates for Invisalign.

Q: What type of patients are not ideal for the Invisalign treatment approach?

AK: Invisalign certainly has its place in patients 12 years old and older. We recommend that children see an orthodontist at age seven for a screening. Depending on the situation, we have started treatment with patients as young as this age. There are so many factors to consider, which is why I went back to graduate school to become an orthodontist.

Q: Do Invisalign trays stay perfectly transparent throughout treatment?

AK: In our office we take special care to teach our patients how to maintain the aligners. Aligners are only meant to be used for two weeks. If the trays are cleaned by brushing and soaking on a regular basis they stay transparent. So, it's very important to have good habits and make a commitment to your treatment.

Q: What are the benefits of Invisalign versus other treatments?

AK: Confidence, social acceptance and self-image are strong motivators. People tell me they love that it's nearly invisible, and you can straighten your teeth without anyone knowing. It's removable, so you can eat and drink what you want. It offers better oral hygiene, and it's more comfortable. There are no wires, metal or brackets to cause mouth abrasion.

Q: How does Invisalign compare with other "invisible" orthodontics like lingual braces?

AK: Lingual braces are an effective treatment for patients in certain circumstances. Since they are placed behind the teeth, they're concealed from view. These braces adjust teeth

by moving them in a similar fashion to traditional braces and are not removable. However, lingual braces can be more costly than Invisalign or clear cosmetic braces. Furthermore, there can be significant irritation and ulceration of the tongue in certain individuals and therefore, Invisalign, where possible, is my preferred treatment approach.

Q: Which dental treatment would take the longest to completely adjust minor teeth misalignments: Invisalign, traditional braces or lingual braces?

AK: Each person has unique orthodontic needs. Before starting any treatment we discuss the treatment options and decide with the patient what will be the best choice for them. The treatment time varies based on patient compliance, tooth adjustments and many other factors. There is no way to say which would be faster.

Q: After a patient completes Invisalign treatment, can he or she use the old trays as retainers?

AK: No. The trays are designed to adjust teeth, so only the last pair of trays is an acceptable retainer for a very short period of time. You will receive a retainer at the end of treatment.

Q: Are there any risks or side effects that come with Invisalign?

AK: As with any orthodontic treatment, an open communicative relationship with your orthodontist is imperative to a good outcome. There are no common risks or side effects that cannot be overcome with good care. We are always looking forward to creating another confident and attractive smile. **LM**

something to smile about

BY KATE AENLLE

A TEEN TELLS *LIFESTYLE*
HOW INVISALIGN
HELPED HER REGAIN
HER CONFIDENCE

Seventeen-year-old Mariana Pineda had crooked teeth, bad bite and, according to her, “not a nice smile.” A year and a half later, the teenager who loves hanging out with friends and drawing feels a lot different about her smile.

Pineda was not surprised that she would need braces. “I knew that my teeth were not the way I wanted them to be,” she says. Being that this would be the first time she wore braces, Pineda chose Invisaligns for aesthetic reasons. “I didn’t want to wear braces during graduation,” she says. “I like the fact that no one could tell I was wearing anything.”

Pineda felt insecure about her teeth for most of her teenage years. “I was self-conscious about my teeth before wearing Invisalign,” she says. “Now my teeth look great.”

At first, having Invisaligns was a bit of an adjustment, but once Pineda got used to taking them on and off, she says, “It was easy.” Pineda’s close friends who had braces always complained about how hard it is to deal with them when you eat or brush your teeth. Pineda didn’t have to deal with that at all. Her speech may have been affected for a couple of days, but then “it was back to normal,” she says.

Some of Pineda’s friends noticed that she was wearing Invisaligns. However, they thought that the Invisaligns were really cool. They also noted that you could hardly see them. “Most people don’t know unless I tell them or take them out,” says Pineda. “It wasn’t a big deal at all.”

Now that she’s got the smile of her dreams, she wants to spread the word to others who are just like her. “I would definitely recommend aligners to others and especially Dr. Kanani. He is really great,” she says. “Since he is an



orthodontist, I knew that if Invisalign couldn’t give me the best smile possible, Dr. Kanani could still use clear braces to tweak it so it was perfect for me.” Luckily, even after other orthodontists told her that she would need braces, she didn’t need them. Her case was treatable with the use of only Invisaligns.

After being treated with Invisaligns, Pineda has a whole new smile, as well as boosted confidence. Invisaligns worked for her – and it shows. “I smile all the time now,” says Pineda. “I’ve also noticed that a lot more people smile back, too!” **LM**