

## **Adult treatment**

### 2. Preprosthetic treatment

In adults, the need may arise to prevent tooth loss or replacement of teeth already lost. For the secondary, permanent teeth are succeeded mostly by false teeth or dentures, and nobody really wants them if they can avoid it.

To stop this problem from occurring, tooth crowding or crooked teeth can be rectified with the purpose of facilitating tooth brushing. This will improve oral hygiene and health and prevents tooth loss caused by caries and periodontitis. Teeth and periodont are protected from damage or – if already present - any reversible damage may heal.

In case a tooth has been lost in spite of all counteractive measures, perhaps due to an accident, or if a permanent tooth never erupts, replacing that tooth may become necessary. Reasons for that depend upon where the gap is located and are either more functional or aesthetical in nature: while functional aspects dominate in the molar region (chewing function), aesthetical indications are more relevant when front teeth are concerned (impaired symmetry). The well-known but not well-loved removable dentures are obviously the cheaper option, but not the best one. Modern dentistry favours implants or implant-borne solutions, because an implant works almost like a natural tooth root and puts physiological, i.e. normal, forces on the jaw bone, preventing that bone from being lost. Bone loss, however, takes place in bone that is not “used” adequately, as it so often happens under removable dentures. This leads to removable dentures fitting less and less well and, as a consequence of that, to painful pressure marks. This type of denture, therefore, occasionally needs more filling material between gum and denture, to ensure that it still fits and to avoid irritation.

What do we have to do with all this, being orthodontists? Well, first of all, we straighten crooked teeth. We eliminate tooth crowding, making sure that the teeth can be brushed more easily. Second, we use adequate orthodontic appliances to make room for implants or bridges. In the area of the back teeth, we help maintain jaw joint health and chewing function. We help you keep your natural teeth healthy and provide space for proper replacement if teeth have been lost.