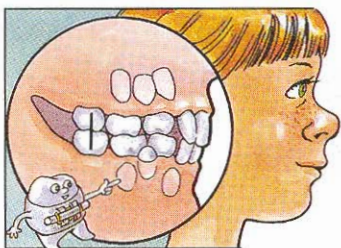


# WHY DO I NEED BRACES?

After looking closely at your teeth and jaws, your orthodontist may say you have a **malocclusion**. That means your teeth and jaws don't meet correctly. There are three kinds of malocclusion, called Class I, Class II, and Class III. You may have other orthodontic problems, too. Your orthodontist can use this page to show you what your orthodontic problem is.

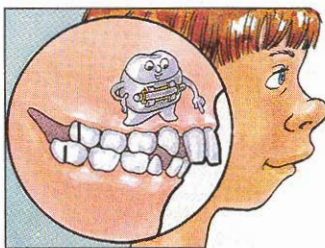
## TYPES OF MALOCCLUSIONS

### Class I



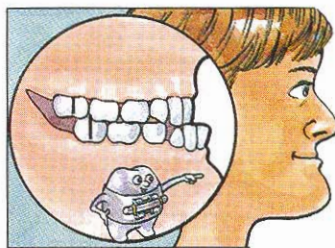
Your jaws line up correctly, but your teeth are crooked, crowded, turned, or spaced too far apart.

### Class II



Your upper jaw is too far in front, or your lower jaw is too far back. It's also called an "overbite."

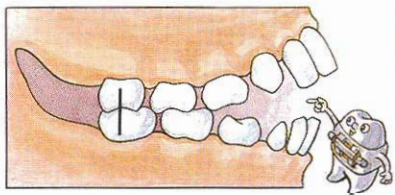
### Class III



Your lower jaw is too far in front, or your upper jaw is too far back. It's also called an "underbite."

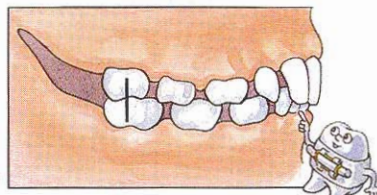
## OTHER ORTHODONTIC PROBLEMS

### Open Bite



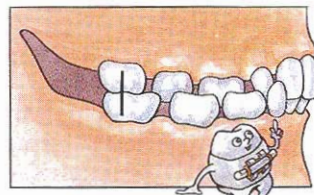
When you bite down with your back teeth, your front teeth stay open.

### Closed Bite



When you bite down, your upper teeth cover your lower teeth.

### Cross Bite

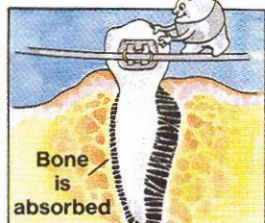


When you bite down, some upper teeth close inside of your lower teeth.

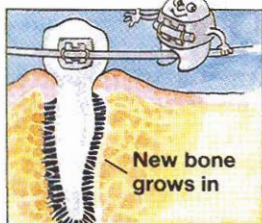
## BRACES AND OTHER APPLIANCES

To correct your malocclusion or other problem, your orthodontist fits you with one or more appliances. An **appliance** is anything you wear in your mouth, like braces or headgear, to move your teeth, jaws, and chewing muscles into better position. Here's how they work.

### Moving Teeth

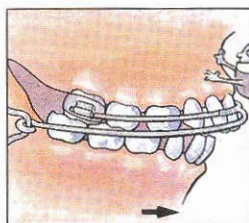


Braces apply gentle pressure to your teeth. Bone is absorbed on one side of the tooth.

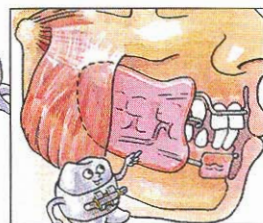


New bone grows in and slowly hardens on the other side to hold teeth in their new positions.

### Changing Jaws and Muscles



Headgear may be used to hold your upper jaw in place while your lower jaw grows to "catch up."



A functional appliance may be used to guide your jaws and chewing muscles into position.