

Orthodontics

***Creating a Beautiful
Healthy Smile
For a Lifetime***

Introducing the Practice of
Michael R. LaFerla, DDS, MS, PC
Specialist in Orthodontics
“Creating Smiles With Style”

2805 E. 29th Street
Joplin, MO 64804
(417) 206-7770
(417) 206-7844 Fax

Patient Days
Tuesday - Friday

Office Hours Available
By Appointment

Who Needs Orthodontics?

Most patients seek orthodontic care because of cosmetic concerns about visible dental crowding or rotations. But an attractive smile is only the most obvious reason for orthodontics. Properly aligned teeth, jaws, and soft tissue will improve your appearance as well as your self-esteem and dental health. Straight teeth are much easier to care for, making them less susceptible to tooth decay and gum disease. Orthodontics can create a beautiful healthy smile that lasts a lifetime.

What's the Right Age for Orthodontic Treatment?

Orthodontics today is not just for kids. Advances have made orthodontics much more comfortable and convenient for adults. Very young children (age 6-10) may benefit from early intervention that could correct skeletal or dental discrepancies, possibly simplifying or eliminating the need for future treatment. Most commonly, treatment is initiated at age 11-14 after all permanent teeth have erupted. However, braces are for people of all ages and have become a common part of society, improving appearances, dental health and self-confidence no matter what the age.

How Do I Get Started?

Your initial appointment is an important opportunity for us to get to know you and what you would like to accomplish. At this visit, Dr. LaFerla will make a thorough examination of your teeth. The exam is comfortable and completely painless. He will then make a recommendation based upon your specific needs

How Does Treatment Work?

Each individual's problem is different and requires a customized treatment plan based on a complete diagnosis of their specific case. This involves taking x-rays, dental impressions and photos from which Dr. LaFerla will make decisions about what treatment will bring the best results. Treatment time varies based upon the complexity of the case, type of treatment, and amount of patient cooperation. Cost can also vary significantly with the type and length of treatment. Dental insurance often will assist with some of the expense and reasonable payment plans are always available.

For Your Protection

Our office is very concerned with the protection of our patients. It is for this reason that we maintain the most up-to-date sterilization techniques. We meet or exceed all guidelines suggested by OSHA, and the ADA. While these techniques are not new to our office, we continue to upgrade these procedures as new guidelines and equipment become available. Our highest priority is the safety of our patients.

Highest Level of Training

Dr. LaFerla and his staff continually go to meetings to learn new and up-to-date techniques in the field of orthodontics, practice management, general dentistry and infection control. By keeping up on the newest information, we are able to give our patients the best treatment available. All of Dr. LaFerla's chairside assistants are Certified Orthodontic Assistants (COA) or in the course of completing their certification.

Our Practice Philosophy

Quality care and individualized attention is the hallmark of our practice. We pride ourselves in taking the time necessary to explain your treatment each step of the way. The more you know about your treatment, the better the results.

Along with the obvious attention to every technical detail, we believe it is possible to treat patients caringly with fun and good humor. Orthodontics is an experience that is meant to enhance the quality of life. We take our work seriously, but pride ourselves in doing it in an enjoyable way.

Choosing to undertake orthodontic treatment is making an investment that will last a lifetime. Choosing the right orthodontist is an important part of that decision. We take pride in the confidence that a good looking smile brings to our patients. We hope we can do the same for you.

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Meet Dr. Michael R. LaFerla

Dr. LaFerla was born in St. Louis, MO moving to Carthage at age six. He graduated from Carthage Senior High School and continued his education at Missouri Southern State College, graduating with honors with a Bachelors of Science degree in Biology.

He earned his Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln in 1993. While there, he served as class president and on numerous university committees. His graduation honors include the Pierre Fauchard Academy Award for outstanding clinician and the Chi Chang Chung Orthodontic Award.

Dr. LaFerla completed his Masters of Science (MS) in Craniofacial Biology and specialty certificate in Orthodontics at the University of Southern California – Los Angeles in 1996. His master's thesis was published on "Ion-Implantation: Effect on Frictional Resistance to Movement".

Since completing his education, he has maintained a private practice in Joplin, MO and written a chapter for the textbook "Atlas of Advanced Orthodontics".

He is an active member of numerous professional organizations, including the American Association of Orthodontics, World Federation of Orthodontics and the American Dental Association, where he has served as President of the Missouri Orthodontic Association and Southwest Missouri Dental Association. He teaches at the University of Nebraska in the graduate orthodontic residency program.

Dr. LaFerla is married to the former Bre Sakas and they have one daughter, Jady Grace. In his spare time, he enjoys traveling, playing golf, water and snow skiing, scuba diving, reading, gardening and watching movies.