



Brace Yourself For A Better Smile

(NAPSA)—Here's something to smile about: Whatever your age, wearing braces today doesn't mean what it used to, and if you're longing for a straighter smile, you're not alone. More than 4 million people in the U.S. wear braces and more than 25 percent of them are adults.

There are many reasons. Some say not having a straight smile holds them back from landing a new job, getting a promotion, fitting in at school, or asking that special someone out on a date. Others see it as a way to improve their self-esteem and health, overall.

The good news is, with today's orthodontic technology, you can avoid much of the appearance-related anxiety that traditional metal braces bring and opt for a more discreet, even invisible way to improve your smile and health. Consider these available options:

• **Ceramic braces**, similar to traditional braces, but with tooth-colored brackets instead of metal. Ceramic braces can correct even serious orthodontic issues but blend into the tooth for a more understated look. They're so subtle that celebrities Tom Cruise and Faith Hill wore them on the red carpet. These tend to be the most wallet-friendly of the new generation of subtle braces. To see how you might look with ceramic braces, visit paintyoursmile.com and upload a photo to virtually "try on" Clarity ADVANCED Ceramic Braces from 3M.

• **Clear aligners**, custom mouthpieces made out of thin plastic, let you progress through wearing a series of aligners over the course of treatment. While this option is very discreet for most of the day, clear aligners need to be removed during meals. They also require a lot of self-discipline, since they must be worn at least



Brace face? Metal mouth? Not with today's inconspicuous choices.

20 to 22 hours a day and losing an aligner delays completion of treatment. Not everyone can be treated with clear aligners, but your orthodontist can tell you if you're a good candidate for these.

• **Lingual braces** are the most discreet option for people who want to keep their braces completely hidden. These use brackets on the back of your teeth, the "lingual" side, and don't require much discipline—once they're in, they stay put until your orthodontist removes them. They're so hidden that Miss Teen USA contestants have competed while wearing them.

Incognito Hidden Braces from 3M are available with options to straighten your whole arch or just the "social six," the teeth that are visible at the front of your mouth. These customized braces are often a good choice for professional adults or anyone who really wants to keep their orthodontic treatment to themselves. Learn more at hiddenbraces.com.

You don't have to let a fear of "metal mouth" keep you from a beautiful, straight smile.

To find a nearby orthodontist, visit www.3MBraces.com.