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Instructions for Your Expander

WHY IS MY CHILD BEING TREATED WITH AN EXPANDER? The upper jaw should normally be slightly wider than the lower jaw. This allows the upper teeth to guide the cheek away from the teeth and prevent cheek biting. It also allows for proper function of the teeth during chewing and speaking. The expander will also allow more space for the developing permanent teeth. There may be an airway benefit to using an expander, but there has been no proven research to demonstrate this at this time.

HOW DOES THE EXPANDER WORK AND WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT?

- Often the expander is turned every night or every other night (Please follow the instructions given to you by the doctor).
- If you forget to do a turn do NOT give extra turns to “catch-up.” Just continue to follow the prescribed schedule.
- Stop turning the appliance after you have completed the number of turns recommended.
- You may experience some pressure (that feels like a sinus headache) after turning the appliance.

This is normal and a good sign!

- **Expect** to see a space opening between your front teeth – another good sign that the appliance is working! This usually closes spontaneously within 6-8 weeks after expansion.
- Make sure to brush all around the appliance and swish with water after eating to loosen any food stuck around it.
- Avoid very sticky foods (gum, caramel, taffy, etc) which may loosen the expander.
- If the expander feels loose please call our office and stop turning the appliance.

HOW LONG WILL THE EXPANDER STAY IN? The expander will be turned until the upper arch becomes wider than the lower arch. Then the expander screw will be stabilized and the appliance will now be a passive retainer for the expansion that was just achieved during the active stage of treatment. This stabilization stage will last about 6-8 months and allows the bone to remodel. Then the expander will be removed.

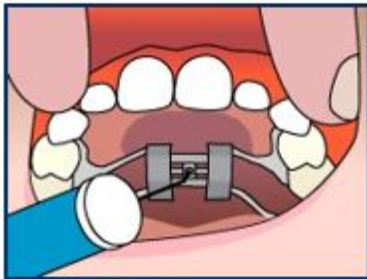
CAN WE DO THE EXPANDER LATER, WHEN MY CHILD IS A TEENAGER? Orthopedic jaw change can only be accomplished in younger, growing patients.

Please do ____ turn(s) every _____ days. Continue your turns until you reach a total of _____ turns or until your next appointment (whichever comes first).



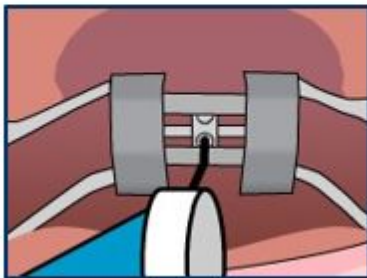
Step 1

In a well-lit area tip the patient's head back.



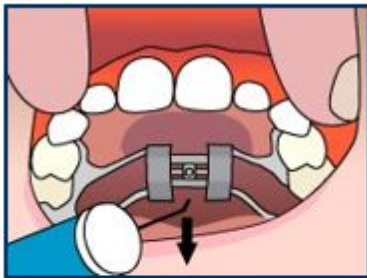
Step 2

Place the key in the hole until it is firmly in place. There is a bend in the key to prevent you from inserting the key too far. So don't worry you won't "poke" the patient!



Step 3

Pushing the key towards the back of the mouth, you will notice the wheel in the expander will rotate and the new hole will appear. The rotation stops when the key meets the back of the expander.



Step 4

By pushing back and down towards the tongue, remove the key. The next hole for insertion of the key should now be visible.

For more instructional videos, please visit youtube. This is an excellent informational video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0UnN2GUQcg&ab_channel=GKGOrthodontics