



ORTHODONTIC SPECIALTY SERVICES

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SKELETAL RME APPLIANCE

The expansion appliance is a specially made device used to widen the upper arch or the roof of the mouth. The appropriate upper jaw width enables teeth to align properly, thereby resulting in a healthier bite. Often, air passages are restricted when a high and narrow jaw exists. Widening the jaw may open the air passages, making it easier to breathe through the nose. The widening process, done by turning a key, gently separates the elastic membrane in the center of the palate. The appliance will remain until the doctor determines removal is appropriate.

EXPECTATIONS:

You may notice that widening the jaw temporarily causes a space between the upper two front teeth. This space will partially close naturally once expansion is finished.

Pressure on the roof of the mouth may cause a tingling sensation at the bridge of the nose and at the corner of the eyes. For most people, this procedure is not painful, though there may be some initial discomfort and some feeling of pressure as the arch expands. Usually, Tylenol will effectively control the discomfort. If it does not, call the office so that we can check the appliance carefully.

GUIDELINES:

MAINTENANCE: The care you must give this appliance is very important. Brush your teeth regularly after eating (including snacks). The use of an oral irrigation (water-pik) device may be necessary to dislodge food particles that may be difficult to otherwise remove.

DIET LIMITATIONS: Be careful to protect orthodontic appliances. For the first day or so, soft foods might be more appropriate. Thereafter, avoid foods which are extremely sticky and hard as they could loosen your appliance. Repeated loose appliances could lengthen treatment time.

LOOSE APPLIANCE: Occasionally an appliance comes loose. It is important to be aware of what is happening in your mouth. Checking for the loose appliance should be done daily in front of a mirror with your index finger and thumb. Holding the appliance with your fingers, check to be sure it is secure. If the appliance moves up and down, discontinue turning and call the office. Even if you have an appointment the day you find the loose appliance, please call in advance to make sure we have scheduled enough time to make any necessary repairs. If the appliance should come completely out of the mouth, place it in an envelope and bring it with you to the appointment.

The doctor will instruct as to when the appliance is to be turned. Do not place any more turns than prescribed. Please call the office if you have forgotten the number of turns prescribed.

ACTIVATING THE APPLIANCE:

Have the patient lift their chin up and carefully insert the key into the hole in the center of the appliance. Gently and steadily push the key from the front toward the back of the mouth until you can turn it no further. Another hole will appear in the area you first inserted the key. Remove the key, being careful not to back up. It will now be ready for the next activation or "turn".

