

PALATAL EXPANDER INSTRUCTIONS

A palate expander is designed to cause growth in the upper jaw at the natural junction of the two upper jaw bones in the center of the palate. There are two bands (rings around the teeth) cemented onto the molars. There is a 3-hole jack screw connecting these bands. The “key” is inserted into the first hole and by pushing down and back the jack screw rotates $\frac{1}{4}$ of a turn and the next hole appears. Each turn causes the right and left halves of the palate to separate about the thickness of a piece of paper. After turning is completed, the palate expander will be left in place for 6 months, during which time the bone in the upper jaw will fill into the space that was created between the two halves of the jaw.

*Insert the key into the hole in the jack screw and push the key down and back at bedtime. This is considered one turn.

* Remove the key only once the entire next hole is visible. When removing the key do not pull the key back forward while it is still in the jack screw. Remove the key by gently pulling it downward toward the tongue.

Total number of turns:

Follow up visits to our office will be scheduled so we may watch the progress.

What is Normal?

It is normal for the patient to feel pressure or tingling in the nose, cheeks, and upper jaw for about 10-20 minutes after turning the jack screw.

A space may develop between the upper central teeth. THIS IS NORMAL and a sign that the palate expander is working. Do not be alarmed if a space does not open. If a space develops, after turning has stopped the upper central incisors will drift back together. This is not a sign of failure but a natural occurrence caused by the gum fibers.

It is also normal for the bite to start to feel different in 1-2 weeks.

Troubleshooting:

If the next hole is not visible, you must find the last hole, reinsert the key and complete the turn. This will bring the next hole forward so that the key can be inserted. Search YouTube for “how to find the key hole on a palatal expander appliance.”

Please call the office for assistance if you are still having difficulty or have any questions.