

RAPID PALATAL EXPANDER

(It's often called a "Hyrax" or simply an "RPE")



You've just had a rapid palatal expander appliance like this one placed in your mouth. Yes, it feels a little strange, and it will take a few days to get used to! Here are a few things that you will want to know about your expander:

1. It feels really big right now, true, but in a few days it won't feel so big at all.
2. The expander might feel a little scratchy to your cheeks or tongue. If there are any areas that feel especially scratchy, just put a little bit of the wax on the rough area.
3. Someone in your family should be turning your expander every other day until we tell you to stop. Each time that the special little screw in the middle of your expander is turned, you'll feel extra pressure on your upper back teeth.
4. Whoever turns the special screw in the middle of your expander will want to be sure to turn it all the way until the "key" stops turning. Turning it this far will allow the next hole to appear, so that the "key" can be easily placed for the next activation of the screw. We usually ask that the screw be turned once a day. **Remember to turn towards the back of the appliance**
5. For the first few days, your teeth will be sore as the expander is pushing on them. You will probably want to eat softer foods for the next few days until this soreness goes away. Within a week or so, this soreness should disappear entirely. Taking aspirin, Motrin, or Advil (whatever you usually take for a headache) will help your teeth to be less sore.
6. A space will start developing between your two front teeth. This space is completely normal, so don't be alarmed! Once we've asked you to stop turning the expander, you'll notice that this space between your front teeth gradually disappears, as the two front teeth move toward each other again.
7. The sensation of pressure that you feel will not only be on the teeth, but you'll probably even feel some pressure around your nose or cheek bone. This is completely normal, and in some people this widening of the nasal passages actually helps them to breathe more easily through their nose! This might help you, too.
8. Your bite will feel a little different every day, because your teeth are moving! And that's what we want, isn't it?
9. In a few weeks, when we've asked your mom or dad to stop turning the special screw in the expander, we'll still leave it in for a few more months (usually two to four more months). This helps the bone of your upper jaw to become very hard so that there is less chance of your upper teeth moving back toward where they used to be.

- Turn every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday night.
- Turn every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday night.

The first night to turn is _____.

Your Expansion Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Wow! It seems like a lot of information! However, getting used to the expander happens pretty quickly. Please remember that the next few days will probably be frustrating for you, as you get used to eating and swallowing with the expander in. **Please don't be discouraged!** Before you know it, you'll be a real pro at wearing your expander. If you have any questions about it, or are having a hard time cleaning around the expander or if the expander comes loose or just doesn't feel right to you, just call us: **951-0151**.