

RAPID PALATAL EXPANDER (RPE)

Your new appliance is a highly specialized, custom made device designed to gently reshape and widen your upper jaw.

It is securely attached to your teeth and your mouth may feel quite full. You may notice you have more saliva and your speech may also be slightly affected. It will take a few days for you to adjust. You will be shown how to clean around it in order to keep your teeth and gums as clean and healthy as possible.

There is a center screw mechanism built into your appliance. It is adjusted by placing a special key, which we will provide, into the keyhole and gently pushing the key in the direction of the arrow toward the back of the mouth. The key will automatically stop when the turn has been completed. We will show your family how to adjust your appliance. It is very important for them to follow the schedule we provide for turning the screw.

After the screw has been turned your mouth may feel slightly uncomfortable for a little while. You may even feel an itching or tingling sensation in the roof of your mouth or on the bridge of your nose. These are normal sensations for this type of appliance and once again should ease within a few hours. You may also notice a space opening up between your two front teeth. This shows us that you are adjusting your appliance properly; be assured that this space is only temporary. Once the desired amount of correction is achieved, you will be instructed to stop adjusting it. You will have to continue to wear it for a few more months in order to maintain the correction.

You must avoid sticky foods such as chewing gum, caramels, or gummy bears, and hard foods such as nuts, or peanut brittle. These types of foods could break your appliance or cause it to loosen.

If you notice any problems with your appliance please call our office immediately and explain that you are wearing an "RPE". If you notice that your appliance is loose you must stop turning it. If this happens on a weekend or a time when our office is closed, leave a message on our answering machine, and we will contact you as soon as possible. During that time make sure you are extra careful when you are eating, and make sure that you brush thoroughly and carefully around the loose side of your appliance. If you require immediate attention you may wish to contact your family dentist, an emergency dental clinic, or your hospital. Please bear in mind that you may be charged for these emergency appointments.

You will be seen at regular intervals to have your appliance checked.