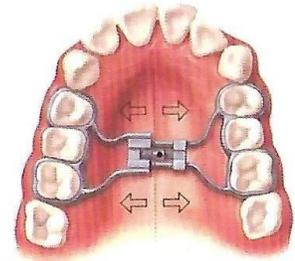


Why Do I Need A Palatal Expander?

The expander is used to widen the upper jaw and decrease the amount of time you wear your braces. By widening the palate or roof of the mouth, the dental arch increases to create more space for your teeth to grow and straighten. It can also create a broader, more beautiful smile, limit any tooth extractions needed to make room for new teeth, and improve your breathing.



What Can I Expect From My Orthodontic Expander?

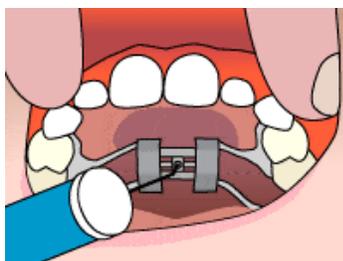
In the beginning, your tongue will have some adjusting to do while speaking and eating. But after a few days of practice, you'll be an expert! The expander, when activated or turned, can cause some slight discomfort and tenderness near the bridge of the nose and cheekbones. To relieve any discomfort, over-the-counter pain relievers like ibuprofen (preferred choice) or acetaminophen. Take the dosage as directed on the bottle. Speaking and eating may feel a little different at first. You may experience a sore throat as you get used to using different muscles to swallow (having a water bottle and taking small sips of water can help get use to swallowing and control saliva flow). You may notice more salivary flow increases.

Tip: Read your favorite book, magazine, etc. to yourself in front of the mirror for five minutes a day – your speech will be perfect in no time.

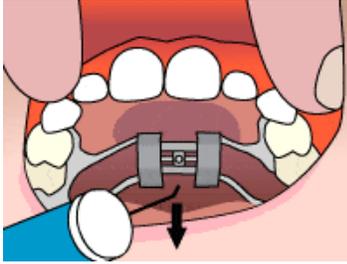
How Do I Use The Orthodontic Expander Key?

The expander is activated by placing the special key into the hole in the center of the expander and gently pushing the key towards the back of the mouth. A turn is completed when you cannot push the key any further backward and you can see a new hole appear in the front. Remove the key carefully toward the throat and you've completed one turn. Do not turn more than prescribed by Dr. If an unusual amount of discomfort is felt and medication is not relieving the discomfort, skip a day. Keep track of how many actual turns are completed. It's important to count the turns. Let Dr. know how many actual turns you made between appointments.

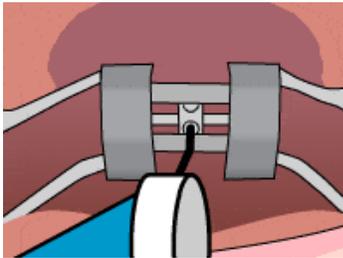
How To Turn Your Expander



Place the key in the center hole and turn in the direction of the arrows on the expander.



Turn the expander toward the back of the mouth until you can see the next hole.



Carefully remove the key in a downward direction. Be very careful not to “unturn” the expander when removing the key.

About The Temporary Space

If space develops between the two front teeth, this is normal. This space will begin to close once the turns have stopped. The bone has widened but the fibers surrounding the teeth will help close the teeth together.

Your Orthodontic Expander Schedule

You can expect to follow this approximate schedule while undergoing your orthodontic expander treatment:

First 6 weeks

- Expander is turned *ONCE* a day for 28 - 36 - 42 days
- Expander is turned *ONCE* every other day for 28 - 36 - 42 days
- Expander is turned *TWICE* a week for 4 - 6 weeks

Total turns = _____

*NEVER turn more often or for a longer duration than the dentist prescribes. If you miss an appointment for monitoring, stop turning the appliance.

Next 6 weeks

Stabilized (worn but not turned), similar to a cast on a broken bone

Once Stabilized for 6 weeks

Once the teeth are stabilized, the expander may be removed and a smaller, transpalatal (across the roof of the mouth) holding bar carefully placed to stabilize the expansion.

Alternatively, the expander will remain but be “locked” so it cannot move. The remaining appliances (braces or aligners) are placed.