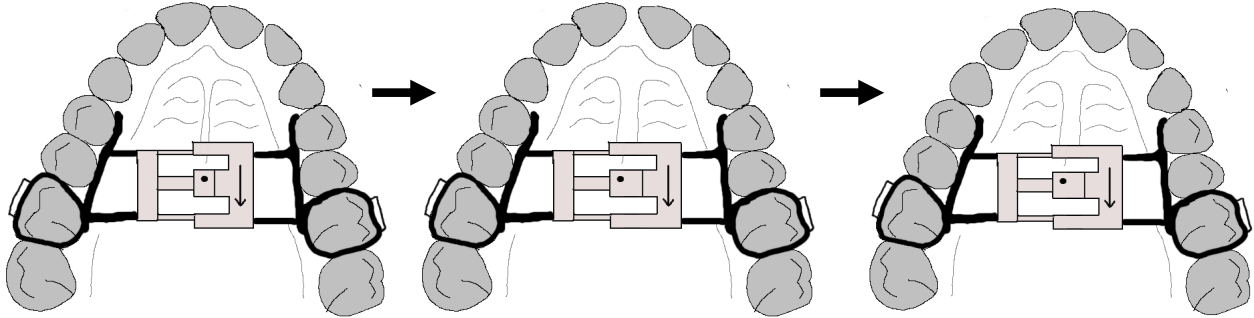


## Rapid Palatal Expander – Care Instructions

1. The palatal expander is designed to **widen both the upper jaw and teeth** to assist in the correction of your bite and increase space for alignment of the teeth.

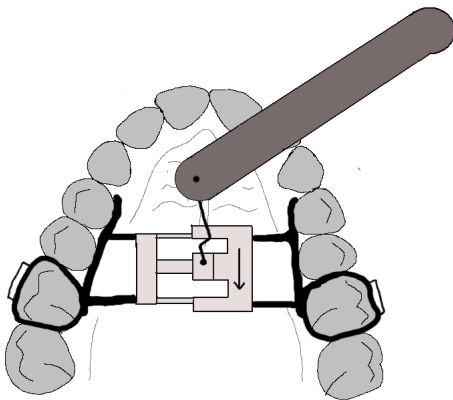


When the expander is initially placed you can expect mild initial discomfort.

After approximately 24 turns you will see a space develop between the front teeth..

After approximately 6-8 weeks the space will close without braces.

2. You will be given a key to **activate** the RPE. Brush your teeth and the expansion screw well. Place the key in the front hole of the appliance. Push the key completely towards the back of the mouth until it stops and the next hole can be seen. Now carefully remove the key towards the back of the mouth. Make sure you can see the next hole before removing the key.



3. **What to expect.** When the appliance is first placed, you will have discomfort from the bands and some tenderness of the tongue. You may need to take ibuprofen or tylenol and rinse with warm salt water for the first few days. Initially there will be an increase in saliva which will reduce in a few days. Swallowing and speaking may be difficult in the beginning but once again this will get better with time. We recommend a soft diet for the first few days. When the appliance is activated you will feel pressure on the teeth and between the front teeth. Some experience a tingling in the nose...both the pressure and the tingling should subside in less than 5 minutes.

3. **Hygiene:** It is important to keep the appliance clean with regular brushing and use of a proxi-brush. I also recommend using a water-pik to help dislodge large particles of food but remember the water-pik does remove plaque from your teeth or the RPE.

4. I recommend activating the expander twice daily, once in the morning and once at night. You have been given a card to monitor the turns. If you forget to turn the expander, don't double-up, **DO NOT EXPAND MORE THAN TWICE DAILY**. Make sure to keep an accurate account of the number of turns and do not go past the total number prescribed. The most common problem we see with the expander is an incomplete turn, where the key cannot be seated for the next activation. You should see the next hole completely before the key is removed. Please call us if you can no longer activate the expander. If one of the arms gets bent or is pinching the gum please call us to adjust the expander. If the expander ever feels loose the bands may need to be recemented. You should carefully follow the food list and avoid sticky, hard foods and yes that means **NO GUM!**

Good Luck, I'm sure you will do great! Dr. Griffies