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PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXPANDERS

The appliance given to you will widen (expand) your upper dental arch. The key that we gave you fits into the appliance. The key is put into the appliance, and moved backward (from the front teeth toward the back) to turn the expansion screw. Turn the key backward as far as it will go, so that the key can be put into the appliance for the next turn. You should see a new hole appear in front of the appliance. Either you or your parent can turn the expansion screw with the key.

THE SCHEDULE FOR TURNING THE APPLIANCE WITH THE KEY IS AS FOLLOWS:

Please turn one time per day for as we have instructed you. We will see you in about one week to make sure the expansion is going correctly. We will then see you in three weeks or so.

Please follow the suggested schedule. Too many turns may cause discomfort. Too few turns will not produce the desired results. Most folks experience a feeling of tightness or pressure around the teeth and cheeks for the first few days. If you feel discomfort, pain, or dizziness, stop turning the appliance and call the office.

A space will probably open between the upper front teeth during the first three weeks as the appliance widens the arch. Do not get alarmed, this is an expected change. The space will disappear in the following few weeks as the front teeth come back together. If you want to check the space between the teeth, do it with a mirror, not with your tongue. A tongue habit can prevent the space from closing.

Please brush your teeth as normal, however, extra attention will need to be spent cleaning around this and any other appliances. With good oral hygiene, you will protect against cavities and gum disease.

After expansion is completed the appliance is sealed and worn for about 8-12 more weeks. This allows complete bone healing.

One of the interesting possible side benefits of maxillary expansion is improved nasal breathing because the floor of the nose is the same bone that is widened. Let us know if you experience this!

THANK YOU!