

You have an EXPANDER

Congratulations on starting your orthodontic treatment with an expander! We are here to help you through this entire journey.

PURPOSE

The palatal expander appliance widens the upper dental arch to improve crossbites, crowding and narrow arches. It also redirects the eruption of permanent teeth into a wider arch form.

TURNING THE EXPANDER

We will teach patients/parents how to activate. At home, lay down in a well lit area on your back. Insert the special key into the small hole in the metal rod at the center of the expander. Push the key towards the back of the mouth until it stops, then remove the key. Another hole will now be at the front of the expander rod for the next turn. You may feel pressure in your teeth, nose and jaws, but there should be no immediate pain. Turns are customized to YOU, so follow your orthodontist's instruction for activation.

Please turn the expander as follows:

Once a day for _____ days

Complete no more than _____ turns



CLEAN & CARE

Brush your teeth in the usual manner, but concentrate on aiming the bristles of the brush around the expander's metal bands. Pay special attention to the area where the wire touches the tongue side of the upper teeth and roof of the mouth. We recommend using a water flosser nightly to flush out food and debris.

Please do not play with or pull at the expander with your tongue or fingers, and do not eat anything that is hard, sticky or chewy. This will bend the wires which can move the teeth in unwanted directions, poke your gums and loosen the bands that are cemented onto your back teeth.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The expander feels bulky at first and you may speak with a slight lisp, but try reading aloud or singing the first night. It is rare for the lisp to persist. Your back teeth may be sore or tender for the next 24-48 hours. If your tongue has a sore spot, place wax over the metal area of the expander especially while sleeping. Please remember to dry the metal area or wire before applying the wax so it will stick better. Rinsing with warm salt water will help sore spots heal more quickly. If a sore spot persists, or if teeth are sore for longer than 3 days, please call us. Also, you may notice a space opening between your two front teeth. This is normal! The space may get bigger with expansion, but will close with time.

Orthodontic emergencies are rare! If you have any after-hours concerns regarding comfort, please call our office number and follow the prompts to leave a detailed message with our on-call clinical assistant. You will be promptly contacted regarding your concern. For non-urgent needs/questions, send an email to admin@keyserortho.com - emails will be responded to on the next business day.

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