

The Expansion Appliance

The following information is extremely important. Please read it thoroughly to better understand and utilize the expansion appliance.

Benefits of Early Expansion

During the first phase of your child's orthodontic treatment, we will be using an appliance known as a rapid palatal expander, which is used to create additional space within the upper jaw.

The many benefits of this early interceptive approach may include:

1. Creation of adequate room for adult teeth to erupt in a more favorable position.
2. Elimination of tooth crowding
3. Better positioning of teeth
4. Improvement of the bite relationship of the upper and lower jaws
5. Improvement of facial appearance and enhancement of child's self-esteem

What it is and how it works

Your child's expansion appliance is a "fixed appliance", which means that it is bonded in place and is not removable by the patient, but will be removed by Dr. Finkelson upon completion.

Expansion is achieved by inserting a key into a small hole located at the center of the appliance and turning it toward the back of the patient's throat until the next key-hole appears, and it is centered. Visible arrows on the appliance indicate the direction in which the key is turned. Expansion is performed on a daily basis by a parent or guardian for between 4-6 weeks until the desired result is achieved. Dr. Finkelson will examine the patient periodically during this time period. After expansion is completed, the appliance will remain fixed for approximately 3-6 months to ensure stability of the newly expanded arch.

NOTE: Expansion sometimes causes a space to appear between the upper front teeth. Do not be alarmed, as this space is evidence that the expansion is working successfully and the space will naturally reduce after expansion is complete. **HANG IN THERE!**

The expansion appliance may feel awkward and uncomfortable at first. Your child may experience some excess salivation and speech may be slightly impaired. Children's ibuprofen may be administered 20 minutes before turning for the first few days to alleviate discomfort.

Remember that these are only temporary inconveniences. Patients generally adjust quickly. To help make the transition smoother, keep your child occupied with normal hobbies and daily activities

Appliance Care

Brushing after each meal is recommended followed by rinsing with a cup of water to dislodge any food particles still present. **Act Fluoride Rinse** used daily before bed is also advised and is beneficial to all patients, even those without expansion appliances.

Please remember to call our office if at any time you have a question or visit our website at www.Finkelson-Orthodontics.com