

PALATAL EXPANDERS SURGICALLY ASSISTED RAPID PALATAL EXPANSION

Here you can find:

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✓ **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The orthodontist very frequently needs to expand the upper jaw in the adult. S/He does this in order to make the arch wider. As s/he makes it wider, s/he can fit more teeth into the arch and avoid the extraction of teeth. When you are younger, the orthodontist can stretch the bones apart because the bones are softer and not firmly attached together. As you grow older, this is not possible. In this case, he will enlist the help of the oral and maxillofacial surgeon.

An expander will be cemented into your mouth BEFORE SURGERY. Then, the upper jaw is surgically separated in two pieces and the expander then pushes the bones apart. This is a very **COMMON** procedure. The procedure is performed as an **outpatient** and is **NOT** painful. You will be able to go back to work/school two days afterwards. You will need to return to have Dr. Heffez check the progress of expansion.

As the upper jaw is expanded a gap will develop between your front teeth. This is where the new bone will form. It is important not to floss the area and to gently brush the area clean so as not to disturb the new bone and the teeth attachment to the bone.

A typical postoperative schedule looks like this:

5 days appliance is activated for first time, instructions are given for you to activate the appliance

1 week later the space that is being created between your two front teeth is checked and the bite is checked.

After another week the separation of teeth and the bite are checked one more time and activation is stopped.

You return to the orthodontist for a check.

The appliance remains in place for 3 months without further activation.

Orthodontic treatment is then resumed.

✓ **FAQ: PALATAL EXPANDERS**

What should I expect every time I activate the appliance?

You should expect FOUR things:

1. The space between your two front teeth will widen
2. You will sense pressure in your cheek bones
3. The bit will change
4. The activation key will get harder to turn (but always able to be turned).

If this is not occurring, call Dr. Heffez on his cell number to make sure that everything is going well.

The pressure on my face bothers me. What can I do?

The pressure in your face is normal when the device is activated. Take a mild pain medication like Advil/ or ibuprofen or Tylenol 30 minutes before activating the appliance to help you.

Are there any stitches?

Yes, the dissolvable stitches typically fall out and you end up spitting them out or swallowing them.

Will I need another jaw surgery afterwards?

When separating the jaw using an expander, it is always possible that you will experience some opening of the bite. The open bite that occurs may not be able to be taken care of with orthodontics alone. In this case, you will need another surgical procedure to close the mouth opening. This surgery would be performed close to the end of the orthodontic treatment.

Why can't I blow my nose after surgery?

The surgery involves separating the jaw with fine saws and instruments into two pieces. The sectioning occurs through the sinuses. If you blow your nose, the air from your nasal cavity will be forced into your sinuses and your face will temporarily swell with air. This would resolve on its own, but it is best to allow the wounds to heal quietly. You should not blow your nose for two weeks.

I notice my nose bleeding after surgery.

Some nasal bleeding is normal in the first 24 hours. Thereafter some pink fluid may be seen coming from your nose as the clots shrink. Simply wipe the fluid away. For any bright persistent bleeding call Dr. Heffez on his cell number.

Is this covered under my medical or dental insurance?

The jaw problem is typically covered under your medical insurance. A preauthorization letter is written to your insurance company before the procedure is performed. In this way you can understand your financial obligations before the procedure.

✓ **POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

You have received an orthodontic key to expand the upper jaw.

- This key should be inserted in the hole in the appliance and then pushed all the way to the back of the throat. Don't worry you will not choke.
- After you have pushed the key all the way back, gently slip the key out. Make sure that the key is not rotated back to its original position. You should see a new hole in the front, where you will insert the key the next time.
- Turn the key once in the morning and again once in the evening.

If you feel a pressure sensation and this is uncomfortable, take an Advil or Tylenol (if your medical history permits). The next time, take this medication 20 minutes before you use the key.

- Every time you turn the key, you should:
 1. feel the same pressure feeling. If you feel it too great or not at all, call your doctor.
 2. feel that the teeth have shifted slightly and that the bite is different.
 3. a space (gap) will develop between the two front teeth.
- **DO NOT** blow your nose for two weeks.
- **DO NOT** floss on either side of the two front teeth.
- Call if there is any change in color of the front teeth.
- Your stitches will dissolve/fall out on their own.
- **DO NOT** Swim/Exercise/Lift Weights/Pick-up Boxes for 2 weeks.
- Call your doctor if there is any persistent oozing of blood from the nose.

AFTER HOURS DR. HEFFEZ TEL. # 224-707-0039

For any emergency do not try to use the web page to diagnose yourself. Go the nearest Hospital emergency room and have the doctors contact Dr. Heffez on his ER TEL #.

✓ **POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: SPANISH** **INSTRUCCIONES POSTOPERATORIAS PARA** **CIRUGIA**

ASISTIDA DE EXPANSION RAPIDA PALATINA

Usted ha recibido una llave ortodontica para expandir su maxilar.

- Esta llave debera ser insertada en el hueco del aparato y debera ser empujada por completo hacia la parte posterior de la garganta.
- Luego de que usted haya empujado la lleve por complete hacia atras, suavemente retire la llave. Asegurese de que la llave no este rotada hacia su posicion original. Usted vera un nuevo orificio en el frente donde usted insertara la llave la proxima vez.
- Dele vuelta una vez en la manana y nuevamente una sola vez en la tarde. Si usted siente presion y en incomoda esta presion tome Advil o Tylenol (solo si su historia medico lo permite). La proxima vez, tomese este medicamento 20 minutos antes de utilizar la llave.
- Cada vez que usted le de la vuelta, usted deberia de:
 1. Sentir la misma presion. Si usted siente que la presion es muy fuerte o no suficiente, llame a su doctor.
 2. Sentir que los dientes se han inclinado ligeramente y que la mordida es diferente.
 3. Aparecera un espacio entre los dos dientes del frente.

SI ESTOS HALLAZGOS NO APARECEN COMUNIQUESE CON SU DOCTOR

- No se suene la nariz por dos semanas.
- No utilice la ceda dental en ninguno de los dos dientes del frente.
- Llame a su doctor si hay algun cambio de color en los dientes del frente.
- Sus suturas o puntos se desapareceran o caeran por si solas.
- No nade, ni haga ejercicio, ni levante pesas ni levante cajs u objetos pesados por 2 semanas.
- Llame a su doctor si hay:
 1. Algun tipo de sangrado por la nariz.
 2. Algun incremento expontaneo en la inflamacion.
 3. Algun tipo de secrecion continuel del sitio de la cirugia.
 4. Fiebre.

Téléfono de Emergencia: 224-707-0039