



# Rapid Palatal Expanders (RPE)

## Rapid Palatal Expander (RPE) Instructions and Care

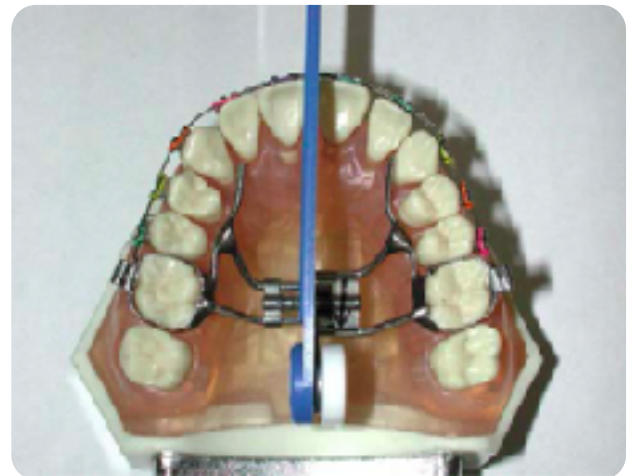
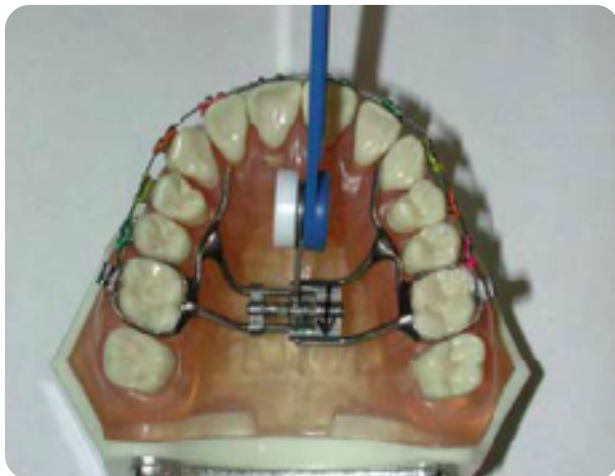
Congratulations, your orthodontic treatment has started! This appliance allows for the creation of more space for the eruption of the permanent teeth and correction of the bite.

Your expander will be activated \_\_\_\_\_ turns a night for \_\_\_\_\_ weeks.

### Activation information and instructions:

Activating the appliance at bedtime is recommended so by the next morning, the pressure from the turn is gone. If you forget one night, you can activate it once in the morning and then again that night, but **no more than two turns in one day.**

- ▶ You will be given a key to activate the RPE.
- ▶ Place key in anterior hole of appliance, towards front teeth.
- ▶ There is an etched arrow in the appliance pointing in the direction the key should be pushed.
- ▶ Push key completely towards back of mouth until it stops and the next hole can be seen fully.
- ▶ Remove the key carefully so the new hole for the next activation is completely visible.





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## Hygiene and diet instructions:

Brush the appliance thoroughly - including the metal bars and screw - in the same way you brush your teeth. If you are unable to brush after eating, swish water around in your mouth to help dislodge any food particles.

At first, eating will probably be a little tricky; take small bites and eat soft foods until you adjust (usually a few days to a week). After that, you should be able to eat almost everything you did before with some exceptions (refer to the No-No Food List).

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## What to expect during this process:

**Speech:** Your speech will be affected. This is not permanent and the best way to get used to this is to speak aloud as much as possible; try reading out loud or singing.

**Soreness:** Your teeth may be sore for the first few days. To help with this you may want to take what you would normally take for a headache; however, chewing and talking are the best ways to get your mouth used to this new feeling. Do not skip days, because skipping days will only extend the amount of time you experience soreness and may complicate treatment.

**Unusual Sensations:** Pressure or tingling of the mouth, tongue, cheeks and nose.

**Your bite will feel off as the width of your palate changes:** As the palate expands, the teeth will not fit together properly. This is to be expected and is a normal part of the process.

**Space between your front teeth:** Although this is a good sign from the standpoint of your treatment, it can be disheartening from a cosmetic point of view. This space should close by itself within a short time.



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## Potential trouble and problems:

- ▶ Please turn appliance as instructed. Do not continue to activate the appliance beyond this time. At your next appointment, you will be told if your expansion is completed or needs to continue.
- ▶ The most common problem we see with the RPE is an incomplete activation where the key cannot be seated for the next activation. You should see the next hole completely in the RPE when the key is removed. Call us if you have this problem and we will get you in to correct it.
- ▶ If one of the arms gets bent or is pinching the gum tissue, please call our office immediately so we can adjust your RPE.
- ▶ Your RPE bands should be cemented and not moving on the teeth. If your bands become loose, please call to have the appliance re-cemented. You should carefully follow the food list and avoid sticky, hard foods. Yes, that means no gum!