

Maxillary Expansion Appliance (MEA)



The MEA will **widen** (expand) your upper jaw. This is an **orthopedic appliance** that works within a 3-6 week time frame to accomplish its movement. Once the jaw is expanded, *the appliance is left in place for a minimum of 6 months* to allow the bone to complete its growth.

- ◆ The key that we gave you fits into the appliance and is pushed backward towards the throat to turn the expansion screw. Push the key **backward as far as it will go**. Check to be sure the next hole is visible at the front of the appliance, so the key can be inserted into the appliance for the next turn.

- ◆ **The schedule for turning the appliance is as follows:**
_____ turn(s) every _____ day(s) for _____ weeks

- ◆ Some patients will feel *soreness* in the teeth only, while others have described a feeling of *pressure/tingling sensation over the bridge of their nose* and near their *cheekbones*.
- ◆ If you feel discomfort, pain, or dizziness that lasts more than 10 minutes, **stop turning the appliance and call the office**.
- ◆ A space may open between the upper front teeth as the appliance widens the arch. **Do not be alarmed** as this is an expected change. This space will diminish as the front teeth come back together after the desired expansion has occurred and/or brackets are placed later on the four front teeth to assist in closing this space.
- ◆ You may have difficulty speaking or swallowing at first (excess saliva may occur initially as the mouth adjusts to the appliance), but after a few days *it will improve*. **Reading aloud** or simply speaking frequently helps this transition.
- ◆ **Clean your appliance daily** and rinse with water to loosen any food that may become trapped. Remember to follow the food list to *avoid breaking or loosening the appliance*.