

Instructions for Rapid Palatal Expander

Your expander is bonded onto your upper teeth. The function of this expander is to widen your upper jaw while you are still growing. The expansion is done by gently activating an expansion screw that is located in the middle of the expander. Since the expander is bonded to your teeth, the screw must be turned inside your mouth with an expander key.

Six Easy Steps to Turn Your expander

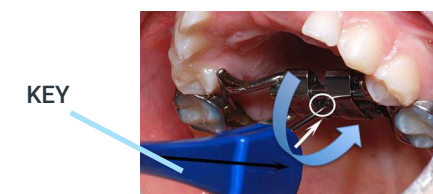
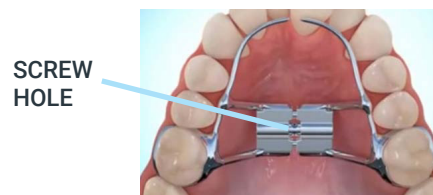
1. Hold the blue handled key with your index finger and thumb.
2. Have your child lay on their back with their head hanging over the end of the bed or couch. Be sure to have adequate lighting. Some people find that using a flashlight provides the best light.
3. Have your child open their mouth as wide as possible.
4. Insert the key into the hole closest to the front teeth on the expansion screw mechanism. It is important that the key is securely inserted into the hole to avoid slipping and poking your child.
5. Turn the key in the **direction of the arrows** until the next hole appears fully.
6. Gently remove the key and be careful not to reverse the turn as you are removing the key. Lightly wiggling the key in a down and back motion will help release the key from the hole if it feels stuck.

What to Expect

- When the screw is turned the first 2-3 times there may be an uncomfortable pushing feeling on your teeth, middle of your upper jaw, your cheeks and you may experience a headache. However, **after a week**, there should not be any discomfort.
- Sometimes a space will develop between your front teeth. The space is temporary and it is **completely normal** and means the appliance is working.
- Speaking may be a bit difficult at first. With practice you will be speaking normally in no time. To practice you can read a book or sing a song out loud to help your tongue to get use to your expander.
- You may notice an increase in the amount of saliva in your mouth which is **temporary** for 2-3 days.
- An imprint of the expander may appear on your tongue. This is normal and will go away with time. If tongue soreness does occur gently brush your tongue with your toothbrush and rinse with warm salt water rinses.

Care

- Brush your teeth and expander well to avoid cavities and gum disease. (A Waterpik may be helpful.)
- Avoid eating hard and sticky food as they may cause it to become loose or even break the expander.
- Call the office if your expander becomes loose or broken.
- Remember to continue visiting your family dentist for regular check ups and cleanings.



ROTATE KEY AROUND HINGE FROM FRONT TO BACK.

NOTE: Never complete more than one turn every other day. If you miss a turn, do not double the turns the next day. Just add another day to the planned schedule.