



## EXPANDER INSTRUCTIONS

When indicated, we use palate expanders in growing patients to:

1. Widen the upper jaw to create room for erupting permanent teeth
2. Improve upper and lower jaw alignment due to a constricted upper arch
3. To enhance the aesthetics of the smile

When you first have the expander placed, your mouth may produce more saliva. If this occurs, make a conscious effort to swallow normally by closing your lips and pushing your tongue up against the roof of your mouth. This will go away as your brain gets use to the expander, typically after a couple of days.

You may talk a little funny for a day or two until your tongue gets used to sharing space with the expander. Practice reading aloud or singing – in no time you will speak normally.

### HOW OFTEN DO WE TURN THE EXPANDER?

The frequency and number of turns is dependent upon each individual case. Please activate as directed by Dr. Antoniazzi / Dr. Lee. If you have any questions, please call our office to clarify.

Patient: \_\_\_\_\_

Turn expander ONCE a day for \_\_\_\_\_ days

Your next visit is \_\_\_\_\_

### **IMPORTANT!**

**Please only turn the expander a maximum of once a day! If you miss a day, do not try and make up an extra turn the next day.**

**Should you need to miss an appointment after you have completed your prescribed turns, please STOP turning and come to the next appointment.**

See reverse for frequently asked questions...

## **HOW DO WE DO THE TURNS?**

In a well-lit area, firmly grip the blue key. Insert the key carefully into the hole in the middle front part of the expander. Push the key gently and steadily from the front toward the back of the mouth. You should feel some resistance while turning it. You will notice that the next hole will rotate in position as you complete your turn. Remove the key by pushing it toward the throat out of the hole.

## **WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE WHEN IT IS TURNED?**

IT SHOULD NOT HURT AT ALL WHEN YOU HAVE YOUR EXPANDER TURNED. If you feel any discomfort, please call our office to discuss. A tingling sensation may occur on the bridge of your nose. Over time, you may develop space open between your two front teeth, but don't worry, it is only temporary.

## **HOW DO I CLEAN MY EXPANDER?**

Brush your teeth as you usually would and brush carefully around your appliance. Use water to "swish" around your mouth to dislodge food particles that may be trapped under the expander.

## **WHAT CAN I EAT?**

For the first few days, eating may feel a bit difficult; take small bites and eat soft foods until this is overcome. After that, you should be able to eat almost everything you did before with some exceptions. Do not eat sticky or chewy foods such as gum, taffy, caramels or licorice. Do not eat hard foods like ice, nuts or popcorn (popcorn is known to stick under the expander and cause gum infections). Whole raw carrots, celery and apples should be cut into bite-size pieces.

## **HOW LONG WILL MY EXPANDER BE IN MY MOUTH?**

The length of time you turn your expander or wear your expander depends on what we are trying to accomplish for you. Most patients have their expander 4-6 months. And when the day comes to take it out, don't worry! It is quick and easy and painless to remove the expander.