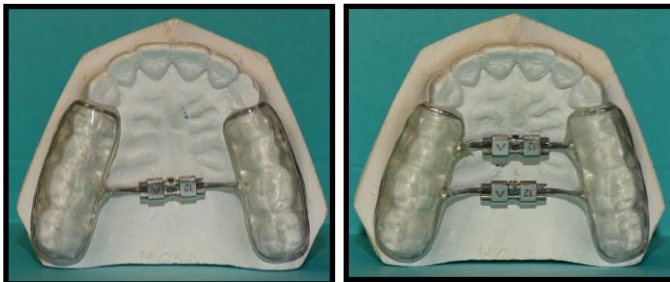


Palate Expanders

The doctor has recommended a Palate Expander as part of your treatment plan. Here is a review of what that appliance is for and how it is used. Further instruction will be given when the appliance is placed.

A **Palate Expander** helps the upper jaw grow wider than it would on its own. This appliance is comfortable to wear because in children the upper jaw is made up of two halves separated by a growth plate. This growth plate is wide open until children are done growing so the expander does not hurt.

A **bondable** expander uses acrylic to cover the posterior teeth. This type of expander might have one or two turn mechanisms depending on how much space is needed.



Sometimes thumb and finger reminders are added to bondable expanders to break habits.

A **banded** expander uses bands cemented on the six-year molars to attach the expander to the upper jaw. This expander has one turn mechanism.



Using an expander key, the expander mechanism is **turned once per day** for approximately one month. After the turns are complete, the turn mechanism is sealed and the appliance remains for another 5 months for a **total of 6 months**. Partial braces are placed at the same time as the expander. Depending on the patient's bite and crowding, expanders are attached to the teeth in two different ways, bonded or banded, however the turn mechanism functions the same for both. Once the expander is removed, it is replaced with a palatal bar to hold the expansion for one year or a headgear in cases of overbite. For older children, a hand-wrist x-ray is taken on girls beginning at age 9 and boys beginning at age 11 to check skeletal maturation to know if their palatal growth plate is still open.