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THACKER ORTHODONTICS

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“M.E.A.”

Maxillary Expansion Appliance

PURPOSE OF THE APPLIANCE:

The MEA is used to widen the upper arch.

- The upper arch may need to be widened due to excessive crowding.
- The upper arch may need to be widened to better align with the lower arch.
- The MEA is used to correct a “crossbite”.
- The MEA is typically worn for 5-7 months, although it is activated for only 2-5 weeks.

ADJUSTMENT EXPECTATIONS:

Adjustment to the MEA may take 4-7 days.

- Begin by eating soft foods and taking smaller drinks and bites than usual.
- Speaking out loud and slower will help to speed the adjustment to the appliance.
- Expect increased salivation for a few days.
- Wax should be used on the bands where the cheek may rub against it.
- It is normal to experience some pressure in the roof of the mouth and a tingling sensation across the bridge of the nose after turning the appliance.
- Expect a space to widen between the front teeth as the appliance is activated, this space will be closed further into treatment.

DISCOMFORT:

You may experience some discomfort across the roof of the mouth or the bridge of the nose.

- Take Ibuprofen or non-aspirin pain medication as you would for a headache.
- Oral rinsing with warm salt water will ease the adjustment.

HOME CARE:

- Brush 3-4 times each day with a soft toothbrush in a circular motion.
- Brush the MEA, a water irrigating device or a interdental brush may be used to clean under the appliance. Swishing vigorously can help to dislodge any foods that may be trapped.
- Use your fluoride nightly as directed.
- Never use any foreign objects to dislodge trapped food from the MEA. Use only a toothbrush, floss, water irrigator or interdental brush.

SPECIAL ISSUES

The MEA will need to be activated (“turned”) as instructed by Dr. Thacker; usually this is done nightly for 2-5 weeks.

- Position the patient where the appliance can be easily seen, usually lying in a well-lit area with the chin pointed to the ceiling. If the hole is not visible try brushing the appliance.
- Insert the key into the hole in the center of the appliance.
- Gently and steadily push the key toward the back of the throat; release the key from the hole allowing it to drop down. The next hole should advance and be fully visible before the key is released.
- If you should lose the key or have problems turning the appliance, please call our office.
- Should the appliance break or become loose please contact our office.

GOOD LUCK ON YOUR ROAD TO A NEW SMILE!!