

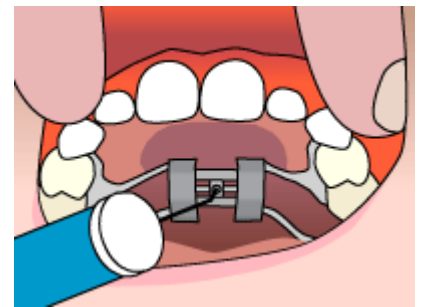
## Guide to your RAPID MAXILLARY EXPANDER

Your Rapid Maxillary Expander (RME for short) is an appliance designed to widen the upper jaw. It is fixed to the teeth with metal bands and has the expansion screw in the centre. The screw is opened using a 'key' once a day – this is usually the responsibility of a parent or guardian. It is normal to feel some pressure around the roof of your mouth and nose after completing the turn. Any discomfort usually subsides within a few hours and pain-relieving medication such as paracetamol or ibuprofen may be taken if required.



### Activating the expander:

- To activate the expander, place the key in the hole and turn as demonstrated towards the back of the mouth, until the next hole for activation is seen.
- If you miss a turn, **do not** do 2 turns the next day
- **Only turn the exact number of times that have been prescribed by your orthodontist** – mark off your turns on the chart below to keep track.
- You may notice a gap opening between your upper front teeth – this is temporary and just means your expander is working!



### Eating and talking with your expander

- Initially it can be difficult to speak clearly with an expander in and you may have a lisp. This will go away in a few days – the more you talk the quicker your speech will come back to normal. Practice saying some tongue-twisters with lots of "S" words.
- It feels unusual to swallow with an expander in place. Take small, frequent sips of water from a drink bottle to get used to it. It is also useful to eat soft food and take small bites for the first couple of days.
- Do not eat anything sticky, chewy or hard that may dislodge the expander.

### Caring for your expander

- Clean your expander three times a day with your toothbrush. Pay particular attention to the gums and the bands around the back teeth. An interdental brush may help remove any food that becomes caught under the expander. A clean expander will be bright and shiny!

**If you have any questions or concerns, please call us on 9687 8243.**