

# The MARA Appliance

## **Description/ Purpose**

The MARA Appliance is made up of two separate metal pieces, one for each dental arch. The arms from each piece mesh together like pieces of a puzzle in order to position the lower jaw into a more ideal position. The purpose of the MARA appliance is to assist with the correction of an overbite of the teeth and jaws by influencing the growth of the jaws. It can also be used to correct a jaw asymmetry. This appliance is especially effective because it is in place 24 hours a day which allows it to work efficiently.

## **Wear**

Since the appliance is cemented on the top teeth and the bottom teeth it cannot be removed from the mouth. So the MARA is in place 24 hours a day.

## **Activation**

Many of our patients undergoing MARA therapy need widening of the upper dental arch. The top part of the MARA can act like an expander. The top appliance is activated by turning the inner screw with a special key. Upon activation most patients feel pressure in the upper jaw and nose area that will last several minutes; this is normal. Your appliance is to be turned \_\_\_\_\_ per day for \_\_\_\_\_ days. If significant and/ or prolonged discomfort occurs after turning, please call.

## **Eating**

Initially there will be some awkwardness in eating and swallowing, but this will soon go away. For the first 3 days, stick to liquids and very soft foods such as eggs, yogurt, mashed potatoes, pasta, etc...chewing small pieces is helpful. Most foods can be consumed but you should continue to stay away from hard (raw carrots, nuts, ice cubes, hard candy...) and sticky foods (gum, caramel, chewy candy...).

## **Cleaning**

It is very important to keep your appliance clean. Food and tartar can build up on the edges so we recommend a quick rinse or scrub after meals; brush your expander thoroughly twice a day. It is very important to scrub the edges of your expander at the gumline so that redness and soreness do not develop.

## **Speech**

Your expander will alter speech for several weeks as you get used to it. Slowly read out loud for 5 to 10 minutes each night to practice your pronunciation. This speeds up the adaptation process.

## **Comfort**

At the sides of the appliance are some metal attachment arms that may initially irritate the inside of the cheeks. Soft wax should be placed each night for the first week to cushion these areas. Also quite helpful is the use of warm salt water rinses twice daily for the first week ( $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of salt in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of warm water). In a few weeks, your cheeks build up calluses so that they not irritated by the arms that stick out.

## **Other Things**

You will notice a temporary increase in saliva during the initial period of adaptation. This is usually gone within the first week. In addition, you may notice some soreness of one or more teeth as the appliance settles during the first few days. Also, contact us if you have any swelling and/ or soreness of the gum tissue that persists several days or more. If you are expanding the top jaw, you will usually notice a space

opening between the upper two front teeth. Do not be alarmed, this is a normal occurrence. If the appliance becomes loose, call for an appointment right away. Keep the appliance seated in the mouth.

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