

Information about the

W-ARCH APPLIANCE

Description:

The fixed W-arch expansion appliance is used to widen the upper jaw and dental arch in order to improve the bite, and/or create more space for crowded teeth.

Wear:

Since the appliance is glued to the upper teeth, it is worn 24 hours a day. The length of time that the expander is in place varies from patient to patient. The “average” length of time is 4-5 months. When worn with braces it will remain longer than this.

Comfort:

Upon activation most patients notice pressure in the upper arch and teeth. There are some metal attachments at the sides of the W-arch that may initially irritate the inside of the cheeks. Soft wax will be given to you to press over this area while your mouth is adapting, this should be placed each night for the first few nights to cushion these areas. Warm salt water rinses can also help with cheek irritation (1/4 tsp of salt in 1/2 cup of warm water). Advil may be taken every 6 hours for discomfort.

Eating:

Initially there will be some awkwardness in eating and swallowing, but this soon goes away. For the first few days stick to soft foods and liquids (eggs, yogurt, pasta, mashed potatoes etc.) Chewing small pieces of food is also helpful at first. Any foods that are hard and crunchy or sticky must be avoided.

Speech:

Your W-arch can interfere with making certain sounds for the first few days. Reading out loud for 10-15 minutes each night helps adapt to speaking with the W-arch in place.

Cleaning:

It is very important to keep your W-arch very clean. Food, plaque and tartar can build up on the edges so we recommend that you scrub it with your toothbrush and toothpaste after meals and before you go to bed. Remember to keep the edges clean to prevent your gum tissue from swelling and becoming sore.

