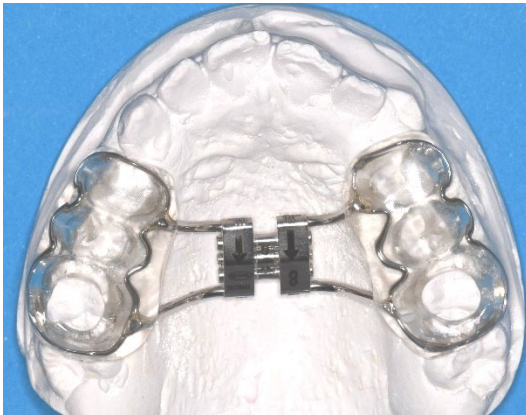


# Rapid Maxillary Expansion

## Information for patients

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Rapid maxillary expansion is used to widen the upper jaw and create space for teeth if they are crowded. It is also used if a patient has difficulties in breathing through their nose to increase the size of the nasal airway and allow easier breathing.



The appliance is cemented onto the teeth at the sides of the mouth and is connected across the roof of the mouth with a screw device. This screw is opened with a special key and widens the arch.

## Instructions

1. Insert the end of the key into the small hole in the central cylinder of the screw and make sure it is fully secure.
2. When the key is fully inserted, push it in the direction of the arrow (down towards the back of the mouth). The screw may be rather hard to turn at first, but do not worry – it is designed like this and will get easier as time goes by.
3. You will notice a gap appearing between the two upper front teeth in the first few days and this will continue until you stop turning the key. Do not worry about this as this is normal and will correct itself later. We will be actively closing any spaces during follow-up treatment.



4. Once the expansion is complete, we will then arrange to see you to review your progress. It is possible that further expansion may be needed or a new expansion device fitted. Once the desired expansion is achieved the expansion device will be left in place for 3 months to allow the front teeth to come together and the arch to settle.
5. At the end of upper arch expansion we may place part of the upper and / or the lower fixed braces to start lining up the teeth. However, it may not be possible to do this until the 3 months stabilisation period is passed and the upper expansion device is removed. We will let you know what we will be doing as time goes by.

6. If you have upper teeth that are set back in relation to the lower teeth, we may sometimes use a facemask headgear in combination with the rapid expansion appliance to move the upper teeth forward. This is worn usually in the evenings and in bed at night.



## Emergencies

Usually most patients have very few problems while treatment is underway. You may experience a little mild to moderate discomfort the first few times the key is activated, but this should disappear after a few days.

If you experience severe pain, or suffer any other severe signs or symptoms, **STOP TURNING THE KEY** and telephone us at your convenience to arrange an emergency appointment on our set emergency clinics.

## Missed Appointments

If you are unable to attend your appointment, please contact us.

Multiple missed appointments may result in discharge from our care, and you may experience harm from your braces. A missed appointment costs NHS Lothian approximately £200.

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