

# ROMICK ORTHODONTICS

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DR. BRIAN ROMICK, DMD, LLC  
PHONE: (513) 232-4110

7655 FIVE MILE RD. SUITE 207 CINCINNATI, OHIO 45230  
FAX: (513) 232-4949 E-MAIL: [info@drromick.com](mailto:info@drromick.com)

## Rapid Palatal Expander (RPE) and Lower Expander Instructions & Care

This sheet is provided to give you information on how to activate your expander, what to expect and hygiene instructions. This procedure also allows for the creation of more space for the eruption of the permanent teeth and correction of the bite.

Your Upper Expander will be activated with \_\_\_\_\_ turn per every \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks.

Your Lower Expander will be activated with \_\_\_\_\_ turn per every \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks.

It is recommended to activate the appliance at bedtime, so by the next morning the pressure from the turn is gone. If you forget one night, that is ok. **Do not do additional turns to catch up.** Keep track of completed turns.

You will be given a key to activate (turn) the expander(s). Place key in anterior hole of appliance, towards front of teeth. The white circle on key should be facing the patient's right side. The key should feel secure in the appliance. There is an etched arrow in the appliance pointing down in the direction the key should be pushed. Push key completely towards back of mouth until the next hole can be seen fully in front of appliance. Remove the key carefully toward the back of throat and be sure not to pull the key up when removing. You want to be able to see the new hole at the front of the appliance. You may notice a space developing between front teeth. Although this is a good sign from a treatment standpoint, we understand it could be disheartening from a cosmetic point of view. By the time you stop turning the expander, the space may seem rather large. This space is a good thing and should close by itself within a short time.

### Hygiene:

Brush the appliance, including the metal bar and screw, in the same way you brush your teeth. In the event you are unable to brush after eating, use water to swish around in mouth to help dislodge any food particles.

### Diet:

At first, eating will be more difficult. It is recommended to take small bites and eat soft foods until this discomfort is gone (usually a week). After that, you should be able to eat almost everything you did before with some exceptions. You will want to AVOID sticky, chewy, hard, crunchy foods (popcorn, ice, nuts, candy, gum, etc).

### Speech:

Your speech will be affected. This is not permanent. The best way to get used to your expander(s) is to speak aloud as much as possible; try reading out loud or singing.

### Soreness:

Your teeth may be sore for a few days. To help alleviate the soreness, we recommend taking what you normally would take for a headache. **YOU WILL FEEL PRESSURE OR TINGLING OF THE MOUTH, TONGUE, CHEEKS, AND NOSE.** As the palate expands, the teeth will not fit together properly. This is all very normal.

Please turn appliances ONLY as instructed. Dr. Romick will inform you when expansion is complete. If your expander ever feels loose or "wiggly," please call our office as the bands will need recemented. Should the appliance fall out, bring it in with you. If you are experiencing any pain or discomfort not listed above, call the office so Dr. Romick can evaluate.