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BONDED EXPANDER REMOVAL

We have just removed the bonded rapid palatal expansion appliance from the upper arch of your child's mouth. You will notice that the tissue surrounding the teeth in the posterior part of the mouth may be **red and irritated** and may bleed easily. This is the usual occurrence following expander removal. In most instances, the irritation will disappear within two or three days.

It is also common for the back teeth not to come in contact when biting on a temporary basis. The teeth should settle together within a short period of time.

In addition to removing the expander, an impression was taken at today's appointment for a retainer called a **maintenance plate**. The plate will be delivered at the next appointment. In the meantime, the expander will be cleaned, trimmed, and returned to your child to be worn fulltime until the next appointment. The purpose of the retainer (and the wear of the "removable" expander) is to maintain the expansion that was achieved through the use of the bonded expander.

Care for both the expander and the maintenance plate are the same. Both the removable expander and the maintenance plate should be worn at all times except when brushing the teeth. Many children find it easier to leave the appliance in the mouth during meals than to remove it. Hard and sticky foods should be avoided in this case. Both appliances should be cleaned after each meal (or run under water to remove food particles) and at bedtime. Either toothpaste or retainer/denture cleaner can be used to maintain the cleanliness of the appliance

Any time the appliance is taken out of the mouth, it should be placed in a container to prevent loss or damage. At home, it is usually convenient to identify one place (for example, in the kitchen) where the appliance is put after taking it out of the mouth. A dish or cup on the kitchen counter is often ideal.

When removing the retainer at school, the appliance should be placed in the case that will be given to your child. It should be stored in the school desk or in some other safe area. The only **safe place** for the retainer is in the patient's mouth or in the retainer case.

The biggest problem with wearing any removable appliance is losing the appliance. Make sure that your child does not wrap the plate in a napkin when eating at restaurants or at school. Very often, the napkin is thrown away, and with it, the retainer. If a replacement plate is indicated, an additional impression is needed as the cast is destroyed in the fabrication process when making any retainer. There is a replacement charge for any lost appliance.

You will notice that there are a number of **metal clasps** attached to the maintenance plate. These clasps help keep the appliance in place. Occasionally, one or more of the metal clasps break off. This is only of concern if your child cannot continue to wear the retainer in the same manner. If

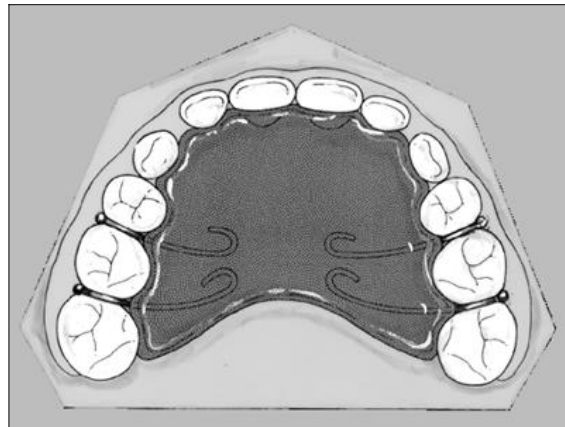
the clasps break and the child is unable to wear the retainer, please call our office immediately.

Because your child has had a fixed appliance, it may take some time to get adjusted to the sensation of a removable appliance. It is usually quite easy to "click" the appliance around the mouth with the tongue, or to continually take it in and out to play with it. This should be discouraged. It is best to put the expander in and **leave it alone** until it is time to take it out. With this practice, your child should feel comfortable with it in a short time.

Keep all appliances away from **heat** (which will melt or warp the plastic) and dogs (it is common for them to be attracted to the smell and chew on the appliance).

If your child has any difficulty in wearing either the removable expander or the maintenance plate, please contact our office immediately. Otherwise, some loss of the expansion that was gained during the first part of treatment may occur.

Please contact our office if you have any questions, and we will be happy to help you.



Maintenance Plate