

## Hyrax / RME (Upper Arch Expander)

1. Turn the appliance once per day. Wrap the string around your fingers, place the "key" in the hole and turn toward the back of the mouth until the next hole fully appears. Remove the key toward the back of the mouth, being careful not to "unturn" the appliance.
2. It is not uncommon for the turning to cause a feeling of pressure or tingling in the roof of the mouth or into the nose, and some patients experience some discomfort for a short time. This can be lessened by taking ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) one hour before turning, and then again 6-8 hours later, if needed. Many patients prefer to be turned right before bed so any soreness is not noticed.
3. Sometime during the first week of turning a space will develop between the front teeth. This is expected and is a good sign! The space will close once all turning is complete.
4. If you miss your appointment, stop turning the appliance and call as soon as possible to reschedule.
5. If the appliance rubs any sore spots, cover the offending area with the wax provided. Patients usually find that the tissues "toughen up" after a short time and wax is no longer needed. Warm salt water rinses can also be soothing for sore areas.
6. Brush and floss normally around the rings. Vigorously swishing water or mouthwash is helpful to remove food caught in the screw portion of the expander, and you may find a proxy brush (Christmas tree-shaped) very helpful.
7. The expander's bands (silver rings) are cemented (glued) to the teeth with special dental adhesive. Biting into hard or sticky/chewy foods (ice, Jolly Ranchers, suckers, nuts, taffy, bubble gum, Starburst, etc.) will crack the glue and loosen the rings. They may also cause the rings to become broken or deformed. This requires a longer appointment to repair and the use of the "yucky" glue. It can significantly slow your treatment progress if rings consistently need repair, and additional costs may be incurred if replacement of the appliance is needed. Sugarless gum is a safe alternative to other candies.
8. If anything breaks or comes loose, **stop turning** the appliance and call the office as soon as possible to schedule an appointment.