



Space Maintainers

A space maintainer is a device that maintains and saves the space of the arch and space between teeth when a tooth has been prematurely lost. There are a few reasons for premature tooth loss, which include: abscessed teeth that require removal, congenitally missing teeth where the space needs to be saved, and trauma/fractured teeth that are beyond repair.

Baby teeth are important as they save space for permanent teeth. If the space is not saved, the other teeth may drift, which can cause crowding and even impede or block the eruption of an adult tooth. Once the spacer is cemented, it can be in your child's mouth for anywhere from 1 year to 3 years. The appliance is removed when the adult tooth erupts or when the teeth holding onto the spacer become loose or fall out.



Lower Lingual Holding Arch

Placed as a temporary lower retainer, the lower lingual holding arch is placed on the inside of the lower teeth and holds the molars in place to prevent them from drifting forward after the loss of the baby tooth. This appliance is used to treat crowding as the permanent teeth erupt.

Patients with this appliance should make sure to pay special attention to the bottom of their mouths while brushing to prevent gum irritation. They should practice good oral hygiene and avoid drinking carbonated beverages and eating hard or sticky foods. Eating or drinking these types of foods can damage the appliance.



Nance Appliance

A Nance appliance is a fixed (non-removable) appliance that acts as a space maintainer to keep the molars from drifting forward and prevent them from blocking the space where the permanent teeth will eventually erupt.

The Nance appliance fits comfortably along the roof of the mouth with bands that are placed on the upper arch of the two back molars. A wire connects the bands and a small piece of acrylic (plastic) is located at the center of the wire.

Patients with this appliance should make sure to pay special attention to the roof of their mouths while brushing to prevent gum irritation. They should practice good oral hygiene and avoid drinking carbonated beverages and eating hard or sticky foods. Eating or drinking these types of foods can damage the appliance.





Habit Breaking Appliance

When your child has a habit of thumb or finger sucking, their teeth can be pushed out of the correct position, which can cause the shape of their palate to change. The pressure from their fingers can also change the way the jaw develops causing a number of problems, such as: protrusion of the upper teeth, an open bite, misaligned teeth, or the lower jaw to decrease in growth which causes a larger overbite. Once your child is older, they may require orthodontic treatment and/or surgery.

Most parents have tried multiple attempts at kicking this habit before they look for other options. Your dentist may recommend placing a habit breaking appliance to encourage your child to quit their habit. The appliance is cemented to their upper molars and rests along the roof of their mouth. It is minimally invasive yet effective. It has blunt "forks" that will discourage your child from putting their fingers or thumb in their mouth. They can still fit their fingers in their mouth but it is uncomfortable, so they tend to stop with the aid of this appliance. Typically, most children will stop sucking their thumb or fingers within 6 months of the appliance being inserted.

Your child may experience some sensitivity for the first few days while they are adjusting to their new appliance. A softer diet and pain relievers can make them more comfortable during this time. Our team will review how to clean your child's teeth around this appliance as well as foods they may need to avoid while they have this appliance in their mouth.

