

Headgear

The application of extraoral forces (pressure directed to the teeth from outside the mouth) is as old as the specialty of orthodontics. Headgears are used primarily in the correction of overbites. The protrusion of the upper teeth can be either dental or skeletal in nature or the combination of both factors. Headgears can be used to retract teeth (by producing an orthodontic or dental force) or to influence facial growth patterns (by producing an orthopedic or skeletal effect). Differ in the method of attachment, direction of the pull, and magnitude of force depending on the result desired.

The length of time that headgear is necessary varies depending on:

- * type of growth pattern
- * the severity of the discrepancy
- * the rate of growth of the patient
- * and most importantly, the consistency of wear (daily vs. intermittent) and the amount of time worn per day

In the headgear treatments, **cooperation is extremely important.**

What To Expect:

- * Some discomfort during the first week which may affect the ability to fall asleep at night. (taking Tylenol 2 hours prior to going to sleep will help during the adjustment period.)
- * The back teeth may become slightly loose with consistently good wear.

What To Do:

- * Try to wear the headgear, 12 to 14 hour per day. (Wearing the headgear all of the time would be ideal but is usually not possible or realistic.)
- * **Be consistent** wearing it at least every night. Missing even one night, requires several extra nights to make up the lost time and can extend the treatment time.
- * Keep a “score card” to track the amount of time worn to allow us to determine if the progress is what should be expected from the time worn.
- * Bring the headgear and the score card with you to each orthodontic appointment
- * **Never wear the headgear during rough play or sports** - injury could occur.
- * If the face bow comes off at night, you need to increase the force one hole each side.

Questions?? Call Eppard Orthodontics (540) 825-6064