

# Herbst Appliance

You have been fitted with a state-of-the-art functional appliance that has been custom designed to fit your teeth. Although this appliance has been around since 1905, it has been modified over the last 10 years to make it more durable and more comfortable. This appliance has several unique advantages in that it uses the most natural force around the teeth to cause them to move — the jaw muscle! It positions the jaw into the correct alignment and if timed during jaw growth, the changes occur in both the teeth and jaw position. In order for this appliance to work it will need to be in place for 9-12 months and will need to be checked every 6-8 weeks.

Let's take a moment and review the parts of the Herbst appliance. If you look carefully you will see 4 stainless steel crowns, two in the top jaw and two in the bottom jaw. There is one rod attached to each lower crown that slides into the sleeve on each corresponding side. Each rod and sleeve is precisely fit to advance the lower jaw into precise position.

As with any new device you can expect a break-in period that might include a period of discomfort for several days. We have prepared this list of do's and don'ts that may help minimize the discomfort during the initial days with this appliance.

- During the first few days you will prefer to eat soft foods slowly with your front teeth.
- Do not try to force your back teeth together!
- **Do not chew ice, pens/pencils, or fingernails.**
- Expect to use Advil or Motrin for any soreness or discomfort you experience during the first week.

Over the years we have improved the durability of this appliance however, on occasion, breakage can still occur. The most common problem occurs when the rod separates from the sleeve when the patient yawns. This most often happens at bedtime! Patients usually can replace the rod into the sleeve by simply opening wide and threading the rod back into the opening of the sleeve. If one of the components breaks, don't panic! Remove any loose rod or sleeve and bring them in at your next visit. **If it breaks after hours and it causes unusual discomfort, contact Dr Eppard at (304) 290-0685.** Most orthodontic emergencies can wait until the next working day as long as all loose and impinging pieces can be removed.

Most patients who do not experience breakage reap the benefits of fewer and shorter visits while this appliance is in place. Following these guidelines will hopefully reduce the risk of breakage so complete overbite correction can occur.

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