



PROTRACTION

HEADGEAR (FACEMASK)

WHY IS MY CHILD BEING TREATED WITH A FACEMASK? Growth of your child's face normally occurs with a forward movement of the upper and lower jaws, but sometimes this growth is not equal. If there is over-growth of the lower jaw or under-growth of the upper jaw, this often translates to an "underbite" and sometimes facial disharmony. The protraction headgear uses external pulling pressure to move the upper jaw forward into a better relationship with the lower jaw.

HOW IS A FACEMASK WORN? The extra-oral part is a removable piece that rests on the forehead and the chin. The pulling force is generated by special elastics worn from the extra-oral component to hooks attached to the upper permanent first molars.

HOW LONG DOES MY CHILD NEED TO WEAR HEADGEAR? 12-14 hours of wear per day are necessary for orthopedic change to occur. Of course, the more you wear it the faster your teeth will move! It must be worn each night while you sleep and enough waking hours to add up to at least 14 hours. For your safety be sure to remove your headgear when running, playing, and riding in the car.

CAN WE DO THE HEADGEAR LATER, WHEN MY CHILD IS A TEENAGER? Orthopedic jaw change can only be accomplished in younger, growing patients.

WILL THE HEADGEAR PREVENT JAW SURGERY AND TOOTH EXTRACTION IN THE FUTURE? In some cases, yes. However, growth is something we cannot predict or control. If the disproportionate growth continues into the teenage years the problem may escape the realm of orthodontic correction.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMETHING BREAKS? If a part does break and the headgear cannot be worn correctly please remove the headgear and call the office for an appointment.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I SHOULD KNOW OR DO? The first night or two may be uncomfortable as you learn to adapt to sleeping with the headgear in place. Keep track of your headgear wear in the Score Card and bring it with you at your visits so we can monitor your progress. Also, please remember to bring your headgear to all appointments so that we can check and adjust it!

Please contact the office if the headgear is fitting differently or if you feel pain or discomfort (other than mild muscle fatigue).

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