

## SMILE ART ORTHODONTICS

### Headgear

The headgear (night brace) is usually recommended when there is a discrepancy in the growth of the two jaws. This results in the teeth and bone of one jaw being ahead of the opposing one. More commonly, we see a prominent upper jaw/ deficient lower jaw, resulting in the upper teeth protruding ahead of the lower ones, creating an excess overjet. Reduced overjet or an underbite is when the opposite situation occurs (prominent lower jaw/deficient upper jaw).

A headgear used to correct a prominent upper jaw consists of:

- **Face bow:** The metal part, which has an inner and outer bow.
- **Strap:** The elastic strap that goes around the back of the neck or the head.

#### Instructions for use:

- Usually it is recommended to use the headgear for about 14 hrs/day. It does not harm to use it for more than 14 hrs/day; the more you use it, the faster you will be done with it.
- When inserting the headgear, make sure the inner bow is parallel to the teeth edges, inserting it in at angle will eventually loosen the bands on your back teeth.
- When removing the headgear, pull it out gently; do not move it up and down a lot as this will also loosen your bands.
- Always support the face bow while hooking on or taking off the strap. Do not engage in contact sports while using the headgear. Be careful around siblings and pets, who may accidentally pull on the headgear. **Not following these precautions may result in severe injury to the eye due to snap back of the face bow.**
- If the bands get loose, please schedule to see the doctor immediately.

#### Care and maintenance:

- Brush your teeth at least 2-3 times/day or every time after you eat. Brush and rinse the face bow to keep it clean.
- Use a fluoride mouth rinse to prevent cavities under the bands. Rinse with it 3 times/day, do not eat, drink or rinse your mouth for at least half hour after rinsing with the fluoride.
- Keep in between meal snacks to a minimum. If you have foods/drinks high in sugar content, it is very important to brush/rinse after you have them.
- Avoid hard and sticky foods; these may pull the bands off the teeth.

Some discomfort is normal in the beginning, but it reduces with regular use. Remember, if you are prescribed a headgear, it is because you need it. So use it as directed and work towards developing a beautiful smile for yourself!!!

-Dr. Monica