

SMILE ART ORTHODONTICS

Reverse-Pull 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). Since the growth of the lower jaw continues long after the upper jaw has stopped growing, this condition tends to get more severe with growth. The prognosis depends on patient cooperation with the headgear and the extent of future growth.

A **Reverse Pull Headgear** is an appliance used to reduce/correct the discrepancy when the lower jaw is ahead of the upper one. The concept behind this appliance is to utilize the flexibility of the sutures of the upper jaw and pull it forward, thus reducing/eliminating the underbite. It is usually combined with an expander to widen the upper jaw.

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 better the results and the faster you will be done with it.
- The headgear should not be used during sports or other physical activities like running, jumping, etc. Be careful around siblings, other children and pets, who may accidentally pull on the headgear. **Not following these precautions may result in severe injury to the eyes, mouth or face.**
- The doctor will demonstrate how to place the headgear on and hook elastics to it. The elastics should be changed at least 3 times a day.
- If the expander/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. Rinse and wipe dry the face bow everyday to keep it clean.
- Use a fluoride mouth rinse to prevent cavities under the bands. Rinse with it three 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 expander/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