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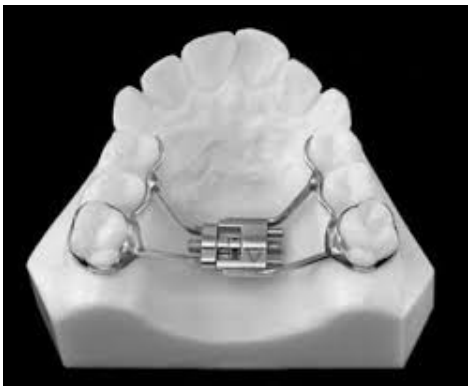
# Rapid Maxillary Expansion (RME)

## What is rapid maxillary expansion (RME)?

Rapid maxillary expansion is a technique used to widen (expand) the upper jaw. The RME is a fixed appliance which is cemented onto the upper molars. It is a metal arch that sits along the roof of the mouth from the upper left molar to the upper right molar. It has an expansion screw in the middle of the arch.

## How does rapid maxillary expansion (RME) work?

The upper jaw bone forms in two halves, the RME moves these two halves apart to create the expansion then holds them there until new bone fills in the space under the gum. The patient will need a responsible person to turn the screw times a day for 10 days. A gap may form between the front teeth, don't worry this is only temporary and will be closed later in the treatment.





## How often do you need to wear the RME?

As the RME is fixed it is worn full time.

## Will the appliance be painful?

Having the appliance fitted is not painful, but the teeth may ache after the appliance has been fitted. This will last approximately 3-5 days and if necessary painkillers (paracetamol) can be taken. Please ensure you follow the instructions on the medication packet. As the RME is placed in the roof of the mouth speech may be affected for the first 1-2 days. Eating and swallowing will seem strange for the first 24 hours but after that will return to normal.

## How long will treatment take?

Treatment time can be anything between 3-9 months and the RME can be worn in conjunction with fixed appliances