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Diplomate of the American Board of Orthodontics

Practice Limited to Orthodontics / Dentofacial Orthopedics

TPA and Lingual Arch Wires

DESCRIPTION

A TPA wire is a fixed appliance used in the upper dental arch. It is composed of a sturdy wire that runs along the upper palate and attaches to bands on the six-year molars. A lingual arch wire is a fixed appliance used in the lower arch that runs along the inside of the teeth and attaches to bands on the six-year molars as well. The most common use of these appliances is to hold space in the dental arch as the permanent teeth develop and erupt into the mouth. They can also be used to do some minor tooth movement or maintaining arch width after expansion. These wires are used to make as much room as possible for your permanent teeth to come in while your deciduous (baby) teeth are becoming loose and falling out.



EATING

Initially mealtimes can be a bit awkward; it is important for the first few days to stick to liquids and soft foods. After this short period of adaptation, most foods can be eaten, especially when cut into small pieces. However, you should continue to stay away from hard and sticky foods.



CLEANING

It is important to keep your appliance clean. Plaque and tartar can collect on it so we recommend a quick rinse or brushing after meals and snacks. At least once a day, scrub your appliance thoroughly with your toothbrush and toothpaste. Brushing thoroughly around the edges of the molar bands will keep your gum tissue healthy.

SPEECH

Talking may be a little harder at first, but this does go away. Applying soft wax to the spot where the appliance attaches to your bands will keep your tongue from getting sore and thus improve your speech.

LOOSE APPLIANCE

It is possible that your appliance could break or become loose in your mouth. If it does, call our office. Sometimes a wire may come loose on one or both sides. This can be caused by playing with the wires with your tongue or fingers or by eating the wrong foods. If you have any problems, call our office for an appointment.

SORENESS

Any soreness can be relieved by using whatever headache remedy you normally use. Gums may become sore and swollen. This usually occurs due to improper brushing techniques. This wire will be in place for six months to two years, so you need to take good care of it. It should be checked daily to be sure that the wire is not pressing on your gums and that the appliance is kept clean.