



# Herbst Appliance

## Why are we using a Herbst?

The Herbst appliance is very effective in correcting large overbites in patients that are growing. The appliance works in 2 ways: 1- Advancement of the lower jaw, increases the airway volume, therefore preventing and/or improving symptoms of sleep apnea and snoring. The amount of growth modification obtainable depends on each individual's growth potential and cannot be predicted. 2- The appliance can work as a "headgear" to pull back on upper teeth without the patient having to be compliant with a bulky and extraoral appliance! The Herbst is much more discrete!

## What to expect:



- At first, your mouth will feel unusually full and speaking will be awkward. By practicing your speech, it will return to normal more quickly
- You will have more saliva than normal. This will go away quickly.
- You might experience irritation to the insides of your cheeks and lips, but the tissue will toughen up after a few days.
- Place wax over the screws to make them smoother.
- Use cotton rolls to place inside your cheeks to keep your lips and cheeks away from the rods while you are sleeping.
- At initial placement/ activation, your teeth will not come together as they did prior to placement of the appliance. This will come together in about a week or so, at which time you will be able to chew normally.

## Eating:

- Chewing will be awkward at first. You should stay with softer foods for a day or two.
- Chewing will take longer than normal
- You should be able to return to a normal diet after a few days (but avoid sticky and brittle foods).

## Other information:

- You will keep your Herbst around a year.
- The most common complication is for a screw to come undone. This usually occurs from fingers being in the mouth. See reverse for screw instructions!
- Sometimes the metal crowns on the teeth can become loose. If this happens, text our office at 770-972-6000.

## Helpful tips:

- Use warm salt water rinses 2x/day (1 tsp in 8 oz of water)
- Brush thoroughly around all crowns and especially under the lower bars.
- Avoid chewing hard and sticky foods which can damage the appliance.
- Pain is rare, but can happen. We recommend over the counter pain relievers (like you would use for a headache) as needed.
- Avoid playing with the appliance with your tongue and fingers.
- Avoid fighting the appliance. Let your jaw go where the appliance allows. Try not to force your jaw where it is difficult to do so.
- For athletes, mouth guards are compatible with the appliance, but the sides would need to be cut out of mouth guard.

## Trouble shooting:

Your new Herbst appliance is quite durable. However, if problems arise while wearing your Herbst appliance, we have provided you with a kit for your convenience, to help you determine if you need to be seen in our office or if you would rather manage the issues at home!

Playing with your Herbst appliance with your fingers or tongue increases the risk of it becoming loose or broken. You should also avoid sticky foods such as gum, caramels, and candy suckers, as well as hard foods like crisp vegetables that could lodge in the Herbst and pull it loose.

Occasionally, a screw on your Herbst may loosen. These have been cemented in place, but they can become loose if they are played with. You will receive a hex wrench (the same as an Allen wrench) in your take home kit so that you may tighten or replace the screws if you feel comfortable doing so. If you cannot locate the kit, the wrench size is 0.05. There are 4 screws on your Herbst: two along the lower teeth and two on the upper teeth.

These screws are on the “mechanism” or “arm.” You can attempt to carefully replace and tighten the screw back in the socket. However, as this is not often possible, it may be best to actually remove the loose arm mechanism completely by unscrewing the screw still attached to the appliance (turn the screw counter clockwise). It is acceptable to wear only one arm mechanism until you can return to our office. Please bring the loose arm with you for your appointment and text us to make that appointment as soon as possible.

Should one of the metal crowns come loose or a wire break, text us for an appointment. If you cannot manage any issues on your own, one of our assistants is always on call to help you. Call the office 770-972-6000 and dial option 3 for the on-call assistant.

