

# The Fixed Herbst® Appliance

One of the most common problems orthodontists treat is the discrepancy that occurs when the upper teeth protrude beyond the lower teeth. Ordinarily, when we see a patient with the upper teeth protruding, we think that the upper jaw and teeth are too far forward; but, more often than not, this condition is due to a small lower jaw that is further back than it should be.



With these patients, we try to encourage the lower jaw to catch up in growth and the Fixed Herbst® Appliance helps us accomplish this. The Herbst® appliance is used in conjunction with full braces.



*Photos show Herbst® appliance used in conjunction with full braces.*

The Herbst® appliance is cemented to the upper first molars and the lower first bicuspid with stainless steel temporary crowns. A tube is attached to the upper member of the appliance and a rod is attached to the lower member. Even though the Herbst® appliance prevents the lower jaw from moving backward, opening and closing movement still occurs easily and patients usually do not have any problems learning to chew their food with the lower jaw in the forward position.

At first, your child's mouth will feel unusually full and speaking will be awkward. But if they practice reading out loud, their ordinary speech will return quickly. They may also notice more saliva than normal, but this will decrease as they become accustomed to the appliance.

The rod and tube may become disconnected if your child opens too wide. If this happens, they can open their mouth wide until they can slide the rod back into the tube. If this continues to occur, let us know at their adjustment appointment and we will place a longer rod in the lower member of the Herbst® appliance.



As with all kinds of braces, patients with a Herbst® appliance need to be careful about what they eat. For instance, sticky foods, such as caramels, bubble gum, and candy suckers can pull the brace away from the teeth. Hard foods, such as hard candies can also bend or loosen the Herbst® appliance.

The appliance will be checked and adjusted at each appointment. If your child develops sore areas inside their cheeks between appointments, do not try to adjust the appliance. Call for an appointment so we can take care of it for you. Patients normally wear the Herbst® appliance for 12 months.



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