



The Care and Feeding of Your Herbst

Congratulations, today you are on your way to correcting your teeth and facial features using one of the most modern and innovative appliances in orthodontics. As you remember Dr. Bertolini explaining, the Herbst appliance corrects a bite problem when the upper jaw and teeth are forward (overgrown) and/or the lower jaw and teeth are too far back (under grown). The great advantage of the Herbst appliance is it works on the lower jaw, where most of the correction is needed and it works faster and is more predictable than other appliances (for instance headgear) because you don't have to remember to put it on. The Herbst appliance will usually result in less overall treatment time in braces and more predictable success without tooth extraction or jaw surgery.

The Herbst appliance works by positioning your lower jaw forward into an overcorrected position giving forward pressures on the teeth, bone and muscles of the lower jaw; and backward pressures on teeth and bone of the upper jaw. The lower-jaw muscles will have a tendency to position your lower jaw just slightly forward of where the Herbst holds it. This allows the lower jaw muscles to promote forward growth of the lower jaw to help in the correction. Since the Herbst is working with your growth cycle, it needs to be worn for 9-15 months as growth is normally a slow gradual process.

As with braces, the Herbst should be handled carefully during eating to avoid breakage. Please be especially careful with hard, sticky or chewy foods. The possibility of the appliance loosening is rare; however, it usually involves abuse by the patient. Please don't play with the appliance with your fingers or chew on pens or pencils. Here is a list of common experiences during Herbst appliance wear:

- 1) Inability to chew: You may experience difficulty chewing for the first 7-12 days. You will quickly adapt to it and be chewing fine in time.
- 2) Appliance rubbing on cheeks: You may get canker sores and cheek irritations initially. These should be treated with orthodontic wax, Orabase and warm salt water rinses. As with braces, the cheeks will toughen and callous to the appliance in time.
- 3) Appliance rocks and tubes disengage: This may happen if you open extra wide (i.e. Yawning) and tubes and rods need merely be reengaged.
- 4) Noticeable face or cheek puffiness: This is dependent on if you are "thin-skinned". The appliances may puff out the cheeks and be noticeable. This will gradually diminish as your jaw correction occurs.

Please take care to brush and clean your appliance thoroughly 4 times daily.
You are on your way to a terrific improvement in your teeth, bite and facial features!
We wish you smooth sailing!