



## 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. Harrington explained that 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 (undergrown). The great advantage of the Herbst appliance is it works on the lower jaw where most of the correction is needed. 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 pressure on the teeth, bone, and muscles of the lower jaw; and backward pressures on the 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 12 – 15 months as growth is normally a slow gradual process.

As with braces, the Herbst should be handled carefully during eating to avoid breakage. 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 do not play with the appliance with your finger or chew on pens or pencils, or excessive side to side movement.

Here is a list of common experiences during Herbst appliance wear:

- **Inability to chew:** You may experience difficulty chewing for the first 7 – 12 days, but you will quickly adapt to this and be chewing fine in time.
- **Appliance rubbing on the cheeks:** You may initially get canker sores and cheek irritations, and these should be treated with cotton under the lower screw, wax (wax taco), or warm salt water rinses. As with braces, the cheeks toughen and callous to the appliance in time. Don't let a sore get started!
- **Appliance rocks and tubes disengage:** This may happen if you open extra wide (i.e., yawning) and the tubes and rods need to be merely re-engaged.
- **Noticeable face or cheek puffiness:** This is dependent on if you're "thin skinned". The appliance 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 three times daily. Good luck! You are on your way to a terrific improvement in your teeth, bite and facial features.

## Herbst Appliance Parts

