

SPACE MAINTAINERS:



BAND AND LOOP OR UNI-LATERAL SPACE MAINTAINER



LOWER LINGUAL HOLDING ARCH OR BILATERAL SPACE MAINTAINER FOR MANDIBLE



NANCE OR BILATERAL SPACE MAINTAINER FOR MAXILLARY ARCH

A baby usually stays in place until a permanent tooth underneath pushes it out and takes its place. Unfortunately, some children lose a baby tooth too soon; a tooth might be knocked out accidentally or removed because of dental problems. When a tooth is lost too early, a space maintainer is recommended to prevent future space loss. Baby teeth are important to your child's present and future dental health. They encourage the normal development of the jaw bones and muscles; they save space for permanent teeth and guide them into position. Some baby teeth do not fall out until age 12 or 14.

If a baby tooth is lost too soon, the teeth beside it may tilt or drift into the empty space. When adjacent teeth shift into the empty space, they create a lack of space in the jaw for permanent teeth. Therefore, permanent teeth are crowded and come in crooked. If left untreated, the condition may require extensive orthodontic treatment.

Space maintainers are appliances made of metal or plastic that are custom fit to your child's mouth. They are small and unobtrusive in appearance. Most children easily adjust to them after a few days. Space maintainers hold open the empty space left by a lost tooth. They steady the remaining teeth, preventing movement until the permanent tooth takes its natural position in the jaw.

Pediatric dentists have four rules for space maintainer care. First, avoid sticky sweets or chewing gum, second, do not tug or push on the space maintainer with your fingers or tongue. Third, keep it clean with conscientious brushing and flossing. Fourth, continue regular dental visits.

Info provided by:

