

The Thornton Adjustable Positioner (TAP®) is an oral device intended to reduce or alleviate nighttime snoring and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). The TAP® device consists of an upper tray that fits over the upper teeth and a lower tray that fits over the lower teeth. A hook mechanism attached to the upper tray fits into a device attached to the lower tray and positions the lower jaw forward, preventing the soft tissue of the throat from collapsing and obstructing the airway. The adjustment key of the TAP® permits the patient to adjust the protrusion of his/her lower jaw to the most effective and comfortable position per the doctor's prescription.

Important Points

- This device is intended to reduce or alleviate nighttime snoring and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). If symptoms of breathing difficulties or other respiratory disorders exist or persist, with or without the use of the device, the patient should contact our office.
- The patient may experience soreness or discomfort in the temporomandibular joint (TMJ), jaw muscles, or teeth. If discomfort persists, the patient should contact our office.
- In the morning, some patients may sense a change in their bite. This sensation should disappear after using the AM Morning aligner. If the bite continues to feel out of place, the patient should contact our office.
- The patient may experience obstruction of oral breathing with any oral appliance in the mouth.
- The patient should return to our office for reevaluation at least yearly, or as often as necessary.

Possible Side Effects

There are possible side effects associated with using the TAP® appliance. These side effects are not common. If you experience any of the following side effects, contact our office.

- Slight tooth or gum discomfort due to pressure of the appliance.
- Excess salivation initially. This will improve as you become accustomed to wearing the TAP®.
- Slight jaw soreness or tightness initially and with adjustments.
- Temporary bite change. This will subside after use of the AM Morning aligner in the morning.
- Unconsciously taking the TAP® out of his/her mouth at night.
- Movement of the teeth.
- Pain or dysfunction of the temporomandibular joint and associated muscles.
- Permanent bite change.

Directions for Daily Use

1. Inspect the device prior to each use. If you observe any material separation, material degradation or cracks, please call our office for an appointment.
2. Use your thumbs and fingers to push each tray to snap it over your teeth. Repeat the same process for each tray.
3. Gently relax your jaw once the TAP is in your mouth.
4. To remove either the upper or lower trays, gently open your lower jaw to disengage the hook. Then, lift up on the lower tray or pull down on the upper tray to loosen either tray and remove.

Operating the Adjustment Key

Note: Operating the Adjustment Key is written from the perspective of the patient with the TAP® in the mouth.

1. To pull your lower jaw forward with the appliance in the mouth, turn the adjustment key counterclockwise (towards your left ear).
2. To return your lower jaw to the starting position with the appliance in the mouth, turn the Adjustment Key clockwise (towards your right ear). Note: One turn of the key is 180 degrees or .25 mm.

AM Morning Aligner

When the lower jaw is placed in a forward position during the night, it may make the jaw muscles a little sore and temporarily change the bite. The AM Morning Aligner is intended to be used as a tool to put your jaw back into a normal bite position. It is imperative to use the AM Morning Aligner every morning to reduce the risk of permanent bite change.

1. Place the AM Morning Aligner over the lower teeth.
2. Gently bite together into the indexed bite position.
3. Keep the teeth in this position for 15-30 minutes.

Homecare Instructions

Mornings

1. Each morning after use, thoroughly clean your TAP® appliance using a denture brush, cool water and antibacterial liquid soap. Do not use hot water.
2. Rinse thoroughly and dry your appliance completely before storing in the container. It will help to leave the container open to ensure that your appliance dries thoroughly. The appliance should be allowed to dry completely each day.
3. Rinse with water before use.

Nights

1. Always brush your teeth and floss well before inserting the appliance into your mouth.
2. Note: Using mouthwash or a denture cleanser will cause the plastic materials of the appliance to deteriorate more rapidly or delaminate more easily. The best way to keep the TAP® appliance clean is to brush it each morning after use as instructed above.

Warning: The TAP® should be stored in a cool, dry place. The appliance is made from heat sensitive materials and should not be stored where temperatures exceed 100°F, such as in the glove compartment of a car or the cargo hold of an airplane. In addition, do not clean the appliance in hot or boiling water, nor soak it in bleach or hydrogen peroxide, or denture cleaners, which will cause the trays to distort or the lining to become brittle and delaminate.

Warning: Do not disassemble any of the TAP® hardware. The TAP® is a medical device and you must not tamper with it other than than following the specific instructions in this handout.

Contacting Our Office

Office Phone Number: 727-786-7550

If you are experiencing a medical emergency, please call 911.

During Normal Business Hours – Call the office phone number listed above.

During Non-Business Hours – If you are experiencing a problem with your treatment and need to speak with the doctor during non-business hours, please call the office number listed above. Follow the prompts for receiving a call back during non-business hours. The doctor will receive your message and will call you at the number that you leave on your message.