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## Palatal Spreading Device

There are certain types of orthodontic problems that are caused by the lack of enough bone growth to accommodate the upper teeth. In other cases there is room for the upper teeth but the palate, or the roof of the mouth, is so narrow that speech is impaired or made difficult. In still another type, the palate is so high that it actually cuts down on the amount of air that can pass through the nose, so that deep breathing, without opening the mouth, is almost impossible. In all of these cases, a palate spreading device is most helpful.

Well, that sounds pretty drastic, doesn't it? Surprisingly, though, it really isn't. The maxilla, or upper jaw, is joined in the center by a suture, or joint, which allows it to be painlessly separated and spread. Once this has occurred, the two halves knit back together and new bone is laid down to make the jaw wider.

So that's how your palate spreading device works. It won't hurt. Your teeth will be uncomfortable for a day or two and sometimes, about a week after the device is cemented into place, you may feel a little "itching" in the roof of your mouth. Don't worry, this is normal as the fibers there stretch and expand.