



## Orthodontics: Wearing Cervical Headgear

Cervical (SER-vi-cle) headgear is an orthodontic appliance (device) worn to move upper teeth and jaw bones into the proper position. The headgear moves the front teeth and jaw backward and closer to the lower teeth.

The headgear has three parts - the **face bow**, the **elastic strap** and the **neck pad** (Picture 1).

The **face bow** has an outer wire and an inner wire. The outer wire of the face bow attaches on both ends to the elastic strap. The inner wire attaches inside your child's mouth. The inner wire is put into place by sliding the ends through two tubes that are cemented onto your child's teeth.

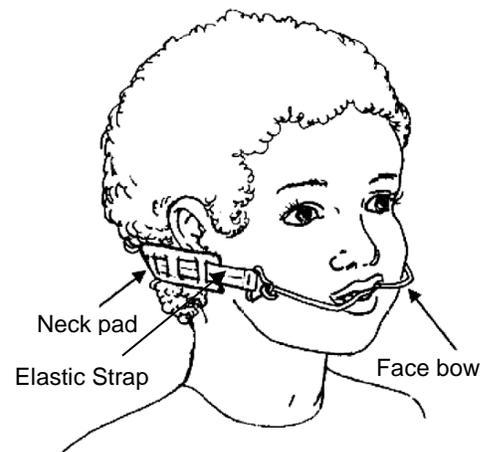
The **elastic strap** is worn behind the head and neck.

The **neck pad** ensures that the elastic strap is comfortable and secure.

When removing the headgear, remove the elastic strap first by unhooking it from the outer wire of the face bow.

### Life with headgear

- Your child will feel some pressure or discomfort during the first week of headgear use. This is because their teeth are moving.
- It is very important to wear the headgear at least 14 hours a day, or as instructed by the orthodontist.
- Remind your child to wear the headgear at home while watching television, doing homework and while sleeping.
- Keep your child's headgear in a safe place, out of reach of pets and children.
- Your child should keep their teeth well-brushed and flossed. This will help prevent cavities.



**Picture 1** Cervical headgear moves the upper front teeth and jaw backward.

## **Caution**

- Do not force the headgear into place or try to adjust it yourself.
- Do not let your child wear the headgear during contact sports or active play.
- Your child should not allow other children, adults or pets to touch the headgear when it is being worn.
- If the appliances inside your child's mouth are loose or broken, your child should STOP wearing the headgear. Contact your child's orthodontist if anything is loose or broken.
- If the facebow gets damaged, your child should STOP wearing the headgear. Contact your child's orthodontist.

## **Cleaning**

- Rinse the face bow with warm water every day.
- The neck pad can be washed with a mild detergent. Rinse well with clear water, then dry.

## **Orthodontic appointments**

- Bring your child's headgear to each appointment.
- The orthodontist will adjust your child's headgear at each visit.
- Contact your child's orthodontist if their appliance becomes loose or broken.
- Orthodontic appointments will be every 4 to 12 weeks.
- Ask the orthodontist any questions you have about the headgear.