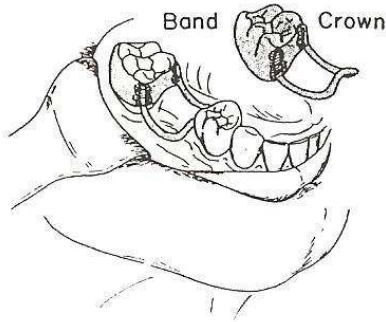


# SPACE MAINTAINER

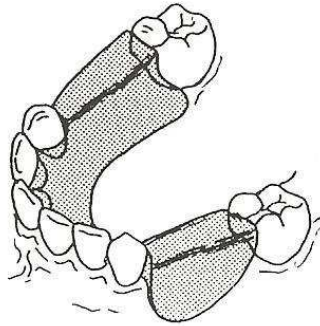
When a tooth is lost too early from an injury or abscess, other teeth may shift into the space and result in a malocclusion or bad bite.

A space maintainer is needed to hold space for the permanent tooth to come in properly after a primary, or "baby" tooth is lost early. A space maintainer for the front teeth will improve the child's appearance and may aid in proper speech development. When a permanent tooth is lost, a space maintainer is also used until a more permanent bridge can be placed.

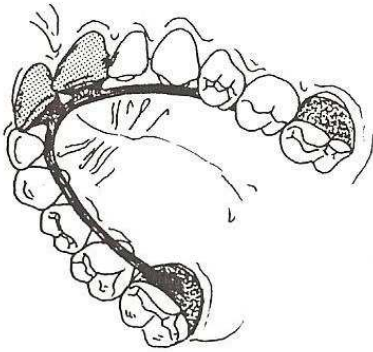


There are several types of space maintainers:

1. **Unilateral** - These hold space on one side of the jaw, upper or lower



2. **Bilateral** - These hold space on opposite sides of the jaw, upper or lower.



3. **Anterior** - These hold space for the front teeth

These different types of space maintainers can be either removable or fixed. Removable are usually made from acrylic (plastic) and can be removed by the patient. Fixed are usually metal and are cemented and cannot be removed by the patient. The selection of the appliance is based upon your child's problem, their age and the number of teeth lost.

## Instructions for the care of a space maintainer:

1. Removable appliances should be replaced in the mouth immediately after cleaning after meals otherwise they may be lost or damaged.
2. Fixed or cemented appliances are cared for through normal toothbrushing and flossing. Extremely hard, brittle and sticky foods are to be avoided as they may loosen the space maintainer. Loose appliances must be re-cemented as soon as possible to prevent breakage or decay underneath.

