

# TECHNIQUE CLINIC

## Conversion of a Rapid Palatal Expander to a Transpalatal Arch

**A**fter rapid maxillary expansion, it is common practice to secure the expansion screw and leave the appliance passively in place for several months. The clinician may then place a transpalatal arch (TPA) to maintain the transverse correction.

The method described in this article eliminates the need to refit the bands, take a new impression for fabrication of the TPA, and schedule a subsequent cementation appointment after re-separation of the band spaces. This is especially helpful in cleft-palate patients<sup>1</sup> and in other cases where additional impressions should be avoided. For example, the patient shown here had recently had an impacted maxillary central incisor exposed and bonded.

### Procedure

1. After active expansion and stabilization (A), remove the expander and clean the cement residue from the teeth. Note the depth of the palatal vault for fabrication of an .036" stainless steel TPA.
2. Secure the TPA to the expander using ligature wire, plaster, or other means (B). Any necessary

changes to the palatal fit of the appliance can be made at this stage by adjusting the TPA's contour or by moving it to the palatal or lingual side of the expansion arms. This allows adjustment in the sagittal or vertical dimension while maintaining the intermolar width.

3. Solder the TPA to the arms of the expander (C).
4. Cut off the original expansion arms and jackscrew.
5. Cement the TPA in place (D). The bands will fit the exact post-expansion transverse dimension without refitting.

### REFERENCES

1. Levy-Bercowski, D.; DeLeon, E.; and Stockstill, J.W.: One-step conversion of a banded expander to a transpalatal bar, *J. Clin. Orthod.* 41:285, 2007.



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