

Cleft nose, lip and upper jaw re-shaping

What is Nasal Alveolar Molding (NAM)?

NAM is a treatment for young infants with cleft lip and palate. A molding appliance is made for the infant and is worn before lip surgery. It looks like a retainer.

How will this help my infant?

The appliance works to re-shape the nose, lip and upper jaw bone. It helps move the bones in the upper jaw closer together. This will reduce the size of the cleft before cleft lip repair, making the operation easier and usually gives better results.

How is the appliance made?

- The orthodontist on the Cleft Palate Team will take an impression of the palate. This is done in clinic with the surgeon present.
- The impression tray is held in your infant's mouth for several seconds until the material is set. Your baby may be upset, but this does not hurt. The tray is removed and your infant's mouth is checked to make sure no material is left in their mouth.
- The orthodontist will use the impression to make the molding appliance.

How is it used?

- You will put the appliance in your infant's mouth. It is held in place outside the mouth with tape on the cheeks.
- Your infant may need time to adjust to feeding with the appliance in place.
- It is worn all the time, except to be cleaned once a day. You will need 2 people to do this. It will be used until cleft lip surgery is done, normally between 3 to 4 months of age.
- It needs to be adjusted each week. This is done at the orthodontist's office.
- A nose piece may be added once the cleft is narrower. This will help re-shape the nose.

The orthodontist will teach you how to tape and care for the molding appliance. If you have any questions about the appliance or its care, call the orthodontist's office. **If your child is sensitive to tape, be sure to tell the orthodontist.**

What are the risks?

The appliance may irritate the nose or inside the mouth. Tape may irritate the cheeks or skin. In rare cases the NAM device can interfere with breathing. Caregivers need to watch for this.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.