

HOW DOES NAM WORK?

Your child will be fitted with a NAM appliance that looks like an orthodontic retainer. The device is attached with small orthodontic rubber bands that are taped to your baby's face.

The NAM appliance causes no pain and after the first few days the plate usually does not bother babies at all; it's an accepted part of their face. The NAM appliance helps gently direct the growth of the gums. The baby wears the appliance 24 hours per day seven days a week including during feeding. Parents change the tape and clean the appliance daily as needed.

The orthodontist gently sculpts the plastic adjusting the shape of the NAM appliance every one to two weeks. Each adjustment is very small, but it starts to guide your baby's gum and nose as they grow. Each appointment takes about 60 minutes. After the cleft is small enough, a post is attached to the molding plate and placed in the nostril. This post is then gently adjusted to lift up the nose and open the nostril.

By the time of surgery, the nose has been lifted and narrowed, the gap in the gums is smaller, and the lips are closer together. A smaller gap means less tension when the surgeon closes the cleft.

