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Myo-functional therapy / oro facial therapy: A dynamic new concept in dentistry and orthotropics

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Just like there is physiotherapy for the rest of the body there is Myo-functional therapy for the mouth. The mouth is a complex of muscles like any other part of our body which are used to bite, smile, swallow and breathe. For their optimum function, these muscles need to be in complete balance with the teeth. Habits of mouth breathing, open mouth rest posture, abnormal swallowing as well as thumb/finger sucking can displace the balance between these muscles. This results in small jaws with crowded teeth, tongue thrusts while swallowing and/or speech problems etc. Esthetically teeth can be realigned and brought back into the right spot with braces, but functionally if these habits persist, the chances of relapse are greater. It also takes longer and is more difficult to achieve orthodontic results without addressing the reason as to what caused the crooked teeth to happen in the first place. Myo-functional Therapy helps with the elimination of oral habits of mouth breathing and finger/thumb-sucking, as well as the establishment of correct tongue rest posture. It also helps establish the correct pattern of chewing and swallowing by eliminating thrusts. The presentation will have many before and after photos to help identify issues that can be corrected using this therapy and how patients will benefit from the long term effects of proper posture and function. Ideally it is best to have a closed mouth at rest; thorough out the day and while as sleep at night, with the tongue supporting the palate. It is also important to have the tongue reach the roof of the mouth while we swallow. If the tongue does not reach the roof and has a low/lateral posture, the chances of using accessory muscles of face for swallowing are greater. That puts strain on those muscles and causes people to retain what they call "The Infantile Swallow." This improper tongue posture also causes the roof of the mouth to be narrow and can result in crowding and an improper bite. Although the way our jaws grow has some genetic component; it is the environment that they grow in that determines their final posture. There will be some great information to share on how oral posture effects growth and how it can be reversed for better airway development.

Proper oral posture involves:

- Teeth together-touching slightly
- Lips resting together without strain
- Tongue to the roof of the mouth during rest and swallowing
- Breathing through the nose at all times

Myo-functional therapy involves neuromuscular re-education and re-patterning of the Oro-facial muscles. Although fairly a new concept, it is gaining immense popularity as an adjunct to orthodontic treatment as well as helping with the redirection of growth. Attendees will learn how a myofunctional screening at new patient exams can help prevent relapse and TMJ issues in the future.

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"V-line" mandible surgery: Facial aesthetics and feminization of the lower face

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In this session the aesthetics of the mandible will be reviewed focusing on the increasing popular procedure of "v-line" mandible surgery. This procedure has been widely discussed in the lay media for its popularity in Korea and other Asian countries, but is not widely taught. During this session, the author will review the indications and technique of mandible contouring surgery, focusing on approaches to narrow the chin and jaw. Surgical techniques are reviewed along with an in depth discussion on patient selection, pitfalls to avoid, and importantly, postoperative care of the surgical patient.

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