



Dental Orthopedics for Optimal Oral-Facial Function and Stability

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Received date: 29 May, 2023, Manuscript No. DHCR-23-104182;

Editor assigned date: 31 May, 2023, PreQC No. DHCR-23-104182 (PQ);

Reviewed date: 14 June, 2023, QC No. DHCR-23-104182;

Revised date: 21 June, 2023, Manuscript No. DHCR-23-104182 (R);

Published date: 28 June, 2023, DOI: 10.4172/2470-0886.1000159

Description

Dental orthopedics, an interdisciplinary field merging dentistry and orthopedics, plays a vital role in achieving optimal oral-facial function and stability. While orthodontics traditionally focuses on tooth alignment, dental orthopedics takes a broader approach by considering the relationship between the teeth, jaws, and surrounding musculoskeletal structures.

Understanding dental orthopedics

Dental orthopedics addresses the growth, development, and alignment of the jaws, as well as their relationship with the craniofacial complex. It acknowledges that tooth misalignment or malocclusion can be influenced by skeletal discrepancies and aims to correct these underlying skeletal issues alongside dental adjustments. By guiding the growth and development of the jaws, dental orthopedics seeks to achieve a stable and balanced occlusion that supports optimal oral health and facial aesthetics.

Dental orthopedics utilizes a variety of methods and techniques to achieve desired outcomes. Functional appliances, such as palatal expanders, orthopedic facemasks, and functional retainers, are commonly used to influence jaw growth and position. These appliances apply gentle forces to stimulate bone growth, correct skeletal imbalances, and guide facial development. Additionally, orthodontic braces and aligners may be used in conjunction with dental orthopedics to address dental alignment and occlusal discrepancies.

Benefits of dental orthopedics

Dental orthopedics offers numerous benefits beyond traditional orthodontic treatment. By addressing skeletal discrepancies, it can improve facial aesthetics by harmonizing facial proportions and profiles. Skeletal issues such as a retruded lower jaw, excessive overbite, or underdeveloped maxilla can significantly impact facial appearance. Dental orthopedics aims to correct these discrepancies, resulting in a more balanced and aesthetically pleasing facial structure. Moreover, dental orthopedics can optimize occlusal relationships,

promoting proper jaw function and reducing the risk of Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) disorders. By aligning the jaws and establishing a stable occlusion, it helps to distribute biting forces evenly, reducing strain on the TMJ and preventing discomfort, clicking, or jaw pain associated with malocclusion.

Another significant benefit of dental orthopedics lies in its impact on airway function. Skeletal discrepancies, particularly in the maxilla and mandible, can contribute to airway obstruction and breathing difficulties, such as obstructive sleep apnea. Dental orthopedics can expand the dental arches and improve the position of the jaws, thereby increasing the available space for proper airflow. This can alleviate breathing problems, promote better sleep quality, and contribute to overall well-being.

Furthermore, dental orthopedics plays a vital role in achieving long-term stability. By correcting skeletal imbalances and optimizing the position of the jaws, it develops a solid foundation for orthodontic treatment. When teeth are aligned within a stable skeletal framework, the risk of relapse is significantly reduced, ensuring that the results of orthodontic treatment are sustainable over time.

Collaboration and multidisciplinary approach

Dental orthopedics necessitates close collaboration between orthodontists, oral and maxillofacial surgeons, and other dental specialists. By working together, these professionals can assess and diagnose skeletal discrepancies, develop treatment plans, and implement comprehensive care. This multidisciplinary approach ensures that patients receive personalized treatment tailored to their specific needs, considering both dental and skeletal factors.

Orthodontists play a pivotal role in dental orthopedics as they are responsible for analyzing dental occlusion, identifying malocclusions, and determining the most appropriate treatment approaches. They work closely with oral and maxillofacial surgeons, who specialize in surgical interventions when necessary to correct significant skeletal discrepancies. Together, they develop a comprehensive treatment plan that addresses both the dental and skeletal components of the patient's condition.

Orthodontists and oral and maxillofacial surgeons are often supported by a team of dental professionals, including periodontists, prosthodontists, and general dentists, who contribute their expertise to ensure comprehensive and coordinated care.

Conclusion

Dental orthopedics offers a holistic approach to achieving optimal oral-facial function and stability. By addressing skeletal imbalances, guiding jaw growth, and harmonizing dental alignment, it aims to develop a balanced occlusion, enhance facial aesthetics, and improve long-term stability. Through collaboration among dental specialists, dental orthopedics can deliver comprehensive care that considers both dental and skeletal factors. With its ability to optimize oral-facial function and stability, dental orthopedics paves the way for healthier, more harmonious smiles and improved quality of life for patients.

Citation: Markiewicz M (2023) Dental Orthopedics for Optimal Oral-Facial Function and Stability. Dent Health Curr Res 9:3.