



Dentally Speaking
by
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Crooked Teeth – How are they Affecting your Health?

Everyone knows that straighter teeth can give you a beautiful smile. However, very few people know that straighter teeth can affect your overall health. Crooked teeth or a bad bite, also known as malocclusion, affects 74% of American adults. Left untreated, misaligned teeth can lead to periodontal (gum) disease and create abnormal amounts of stress on the teeth and jaws which can lead to premature wear. The affects of crooked teeth can worsen over time and may adversely affect your overall health.

Common Types of Teeth Misalignment:

- Crowding
- Spacing
- Deep Bites
- Open Bites
- Crossbites
- Edge-to-Edge Bites
- Excessively Flared Teeth

Crooked teeth can affect your bite creating unnatural stress or pressure on certain teeth in your mouth leading to premature wear. These teeth that are subject to this excessive pressure will prematurely chip and flatten potentially causing fractures. In addition, notches (called abfractions) can form along

your gum-line due to this abnormal “torque” on your teeth. Many people have been told that this is from brushing their teeth too hard, but this is an old dental myth that has been disproven for years. Additionally, a bad bite can produce improper forces on the jaw joint leading to jaw pain, TMJ disorders, ear aches, vertigo, and headaches.

Signs of Abnormal Stress from Untreated Crooked Teeth:

- Chipping
- Worn Down or Flattened front teeth
- Fracture lines or fractured edges of teeth
- Notches along gumline (abfractions)
- TMJ problems
- Jaw Pain
- Headaches
- Ear Aches

Crooked teeth can affect your periodontal health significantly because it is difficult to remove plaque and bacteria from the crowded areas. Bacteria that is not properly removed can multiply and trigger periodontal disease which begins as gum inflammation, redness, and bleeding while brushing and flossing. Healthy gums do NOT bleed! Therefore, not only are your teeth being prematurely worn down, but the bone support around your teeth can be affected leading to periodontal problems, loose teeth, and in some cases, tooth loss.

Signs of Gum Problems from Untreated Crooked Teeth:

- Bad Breath
- Gum Recession

- Gum Inflammation
- Redness
- Bleeding
- Periodontal(gum) disease
- Loose Teeth
- Tooth Loss

Crooked teeth that are not addressed can trap bacteria that damages gum tissue cells and spread throughout your body. The same types of plaque that accumulate in your mouth will travel to the rest of your body increasing your chances for many other serious systemic diseases and conditions.

People with crooked teeth can be at a higher risk for gum disease which is associated with a higher incidence of the following health conditions:

- Heart Disease
- Strokes
- Diabetes
- Weakened Immune System

So how can you address your teeth if you have any of these mentioned misalignments? In today's world of dentistry there are many options. The obvious treatment that most people are familiar with is traditional braces. However, even this technology has drastically improved so that the process is faster and more efficient than ever before. For some adults that are unwilling to wear braces, they may be candidates for invisible retainer appliances such as Invisalign and Bioliners that allow teeth be moved without having braces at all.

In fact, we are even using removable appliances that only need to be worn in the evening and night-time called Inman

Aligners, that can move teeth in as little as 3-5 months in some cases. For those adults that this is still not fast enough, or do not want to be compliant with any type of appliance, porcelain veneers can correct your misaligned teeth in as little as 2 weeks!

Treatment Options for Correcting Misaligned Teeth:

- Traditional Braces
- Invisalign
- Bioliners
- Inman Aligners
- Porcelain Veneers

Teeth that fit together correctly last longer and are less likely to need costly dentistry in the future. In addition, straighter teeth make you look and feel healthier. With the advancements in dental technology we are able to give our patients straighter, healthier teeth in a variety of ways. Considering the short amount of time needed to correct certain situations, maybe this is something you should investigate to see what the best option for you is.

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