



SUN TIMES

HOW TEETH AFFECT **SPEECH** AND **APPEARANCE**

Two of the most important factors in life - communication and appearance - depend on teeth.

The alignment, size and amount of teeth or jawbone can greatly alter speech and facial shape. The tongue, lips and cheeks also have an effect.



From birth, humans communicate their wants and needs through sounds from their vocal cords.

As we develop, we're able to better articulate by speaking a language made up of combinations of very specific sounds (or sign language for the hearing-impaired).

When the teeth, jaw or other parts of the mouth are

even slightly abnormal, it makes it difficult, or even impossible, to create these sounds.

An overbite makes it difficult to pronounce "f" and "v" because the upper teeth can't touch the lower lip.

An open bite, in which the top and bottom teeth don't come together when the jaw is closed, creates slurring, because (Continued on page 2)...

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HOW TEETH AFFECT SPEECH & APPEARANCE, CONTINUED



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the tongue must touch the back of the front teeth to pronounce "S." Those teeth must also come together to redirect air and create a "z."

Air flow is also a factor with crooked teeth, which have gaps that can cause unintentional whistling while speaking.

A particularly challenging defect is ankyloglossia, also known as tongue-tie. It occurs when the tissue underneath the tongue is too short or thick and restricts the tongue's motion.

Another major speech impediment is narrow arches, which lead to the tongue

always being in the way of the teeth.

And even if everything in the mouth is correctly developed, embarrassing stains or large teeth can make someone not want to open their mouth the whole way while speaking, and they'll mumble as a result.

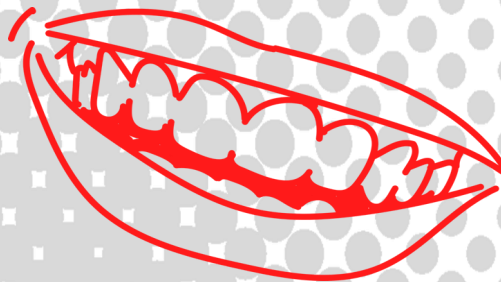
Additionally, these speech-affecting traits are more detrimental if they occur at a young age when a child is just learning to speak.

Your teeth and jaw also greatly affect your overall facial appearance. Aside from the appearance of your smile itself, the alignment, size and lack of teeth can change the length, width and shape of your face.

The most obvious effect is the lack of

many teeth, which causes the lips to sink into the face and create a stereotypical old man/woman appearance.

Compounding the problem is the fact that the upper and lower arches suffer bone loss when teeth are gone.



If teeth are missing or misaligned in some areas, the mouth may appear crooked. If the arches are narrow, the face appears slimmer and cheeks sunken in.

An overbite causes the chin to recess. An underbite makes it protrude. And an open bite prevents lips from closing and makes the upper lip flare out.

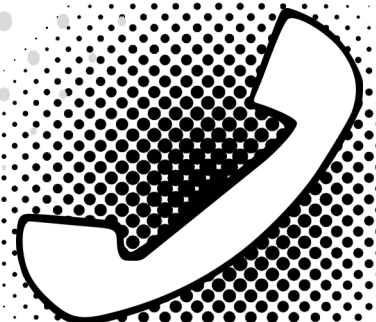
Luckily, most of these problems can

be corrected with orthodontic treatment. Dr. Sun's office provides multiple options for aligning teeth.

When we do orthodontic treatment at our office, we take before and after photos of the teeth and from the front and side of a patient's face to show the internal and external changes that take place from correcting teeth.

For more severe cases, we can refer a patient to a specialist. Speech therapy is also a common aid to help develop proper communication.

If you're concerned your teeth and think you may need orthodontic treatment, call us at (760) 810-7297 to schedule a consultation.



Foods that can **BREAK** Teeth or Braces

Accidents happen with your teeth, but they're more likely to happen when you eat these foods. Hard foods can break teeth, fillings, crowns and other dental restorations. Chewy foods can dislodge orthodontic appliances and more. Foods you bite into and tear off can have the same effect. And it's never a good idea to chew on inedible objects, such as fingernails or pencils.



Bone-In
Meat

Corn Nuts



Corn on
the Cob

Beef Jerky



Un sliced
Apples

Ice Cubes

Almonds

Protein
Bars



Popcorn
Kernels



Hard
Candy

Stone
Fruits