



GREAT SMILES

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY & ORTHODONTICS

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Crossbite

1. Exactly what is a crossbite?

A crossbite is when the transverse relationship of the maxillary (upper) teeth and mandibular (lower) teeth are not in the appropriate position for a correct bite. This can be a dental (tooth) crossbite or a skeletal (bone) crossbite.

2. What damage can it cause?

It can cause damage to the normal growth and development of a growing child because the lower jaw is placed in an improper position and consequently, growth of the facial structure can be misdirected. Crossbites also can cause functional problems in that it is hard to position the teeth in the proper position to chew food, etc.

3. When should this type of problem be corrected?

The answer depends on the particular patient's problem, but generally speaking, it is advantageous to correct a crossbite at a young age.

4. How can crossbites be corrected?

This depends on whether it is a "dental" crossbite or a "skeletal" crossbite. Some examples of crossbite treatment are as follows"

- A. **Occlusal Adjustment** - a procedure performed when a crossbite is caused by the premature contact of a tooth or a group of teeth.
- B. **Quad-helix** - a fixed orthodontic appliance to correct "dental" crossbites.
- C. **Upper lingual arch with springs** - a fixed orthodontic appliance to correct anterior "dental" crossbites.
- D. **Hyrax** - an orthopedic orthodontic appliance to correct "skeletal" crossbites.
- E. **Surgery** - a combination of orthodontics and surgery, usually done on adults because of the maturity of the bone.

5. If a crossbite is corrected in a young person, can one be assured that he will not need orthodontic treatment later on?

No. A crossbite is only one dimension of a functional bite. The crossbite correction will not alleviate crowding, over bites, or deep-bites, etc.

6. If the crossbite correction is not going to alleviate the need for further orthodontics, then why not wait until we can do it all at one time?

Because if we wait until all the permanent teeth have erupted, then we have virtually lost all growth potential, and in the growing years a crossbite can cause uneven growth of the lower jaw resulting in an asymmetric lower jaw.