

The Occlusal Dynamic

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Dental occlusion refers to closure which is assumed to be uneventful. But most closure is uneven because there are many facets on the teeth that may not coincide with one another so that a malocclusion develops. A disharmony can become harmonious by self adjustment which may be natural or the opposing jaws may never reach a harmonious state. It is up to the dentist to reach that decision however many do not look for disharmonies because there are few measuring systems to assess occlusal pathology. Often the pathology is an attempt by a patient to self adjust by grinding and gnashing their teeth. They never reach an occlusal harmony. That is the responsibility of the dental clinician but if the dentist does not see nor measure the disparities in the occlusal dynamic then the pathology remains and the oral health declines over time. Dentistry as a profession needs more education on the occlusion and better ways to assess the biting pathologies that exist in most people. An often used analogy is to a smooth running auto mobile where the wheels are properly balanced and aligned. First the teeth and then the jaws. It is worth a "look".