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The Right Position - TMJ Treatment and Teeth Straightening by Specialist Dental Services

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Dentistry is about a lot more than just teeth themselves. It involves the jaw and supporting bone structures, the gums, the position of the teeth and the relation of the teeth to each other.

Periodontists for example specialise in the teethâ€™s surrounding structures and the diseases the afflict them. The periodontium, or supporting tissues, include the gums, cementum and alveolar bone, all of which are vital for the support of healthy teeth.

Diseases of the periodontium are generally the result of a build up of bacterial plaque, which left untreated, can cause the loss of a tooth. Periodontists treat infections around the tooth to prevent them spreading to the alveolar bone (which supports the teeth).

Besides periodontics, dentistry also examines and treats problems relating to the position of the jaw. TMJ, or the Temporomandibular Joint is what connects the lower jaw to the skull. Problems in this area can cause pain in the head, neck and ears and lead to the jaw locking in position, which makes chewing very difficult.

Specialists in TMJ treatments employ methods such as relaxation and, in chronic cases, suggest psychological treatment and stress management techniques such as cognitive behavioural therapy to break habits such as setting the jaw too rigidly or grinding the teeth.

Another common TMJ treatment uses clear appliances that fit between the upper and lower teeth to prevent grinding. These appliances are known as splints or â€˜bite platesâ€™ and are a temporary measure, generally used in conjunction with relaxation therapies.

The position of the jaw can be affected by TMJ disorders and not only causes pain but affects your natural bite and the way you chew food. TMJ treatment helps correct this position â€“ which needs to be right if other work, such as teeth straightening is to be undertaken.

Teethâ€™s straightening is achieved by applying small amounts of pressure over a fixed period of time to the teeth, to move them into alignment. Braces are a common treatment for misaligned teeth and involve a wire held in place by small brackets on each tooth, which applies pressure to straighten the teeth.

Braces are cost-effective and produce excellent results, but as any teenager who has worn them will remember, they are very visible. Some people prefer to use teeth straightening aligners â€“ clear supports modelled to your teeth which gently set their position over the course of several months.

Itâ€™s usually necessary to change aligners every two weeks and the process is more expensive than regular braces. However, aligners are more or less invisible and achieve much the same results in terms of teeth straightening.

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