



The Orthodontic Myth Busters

Episode 9: The Case of The Jaw that Grew Some More

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As a health care provider, one has to be well trained in their field, but also on the lookout for dangerous misconceptions that lurk amongst us. As we continue to bust these myths, we ask you to join our team to help us spread the truth, and help others achieve a beautiful healthy smile, in a shorter more pleasurable way. So read the story, absorb the lesson and BUST THE MYTH!

Shimmy Cohen took off his retainer that he wore every night, and started brushing his teeth, when all of a sudden he noticed that his chin looked bigger; and his lower teeth were in front of his upper teeth! He checked the mirror, as this must have been one of his little brother's prank joke mirrors.... But it wasn't. Shimmy's heart sank, all those years, from ages 9-10 years old, in Doc's office, wearing his face mask and expander to correct his class 3 bite: the underbite with its characteristic small upper jaw and longer lower jaw, and now.... **it was back!** He looked at his watch. Doc's office had just opened so he ran out the door with a lot of questions for Doc.

"Hi Shimmy", smiled Doc, "you look concerned. What's the matter?" "Concerned? I..I look more like a bull dog," growled Shimmy. "Look at my bite!" You did a great job and for so many years it was perfect, I wore my retainers exactly as you said yet now my lower jaw is bigger than my upper jaw and I bite in reverse. What happened?

Doc put his hand on Shimmy's shoulder and asked him to sit down.

"Do you remember our conversation about the three different jaw growth patterns?

"Class 1: Harmonious upper and lower growth. **Class 2:** The lower jaw is small and growing slowly while the upper jaw is growing normally or faster than usual. Then there's **Class 3**, the growth pattern that you have; a small slow growing upper jaw and a strong fast growing lower jaw called the mandible.

"Do you know that at my first job out of school, my boss

referred Class 3 patients out to a different orthodontist? He was a good orthodontist but knew that when treating Class 3 malocclusions, the harsh reality was that the lower jaw on these patients sometimes continued to grow forward, even after the age of 18-20 years old.

Compensating/correcting this potential problem requires

1. A reminder of the usually forgotten conversation with the parents and patient often had over 5 years before. **2.** Overcorrection of the original malocclusion **3.** A touch up treatment depending on the late growth: Active retainers, Invisalign or even braces with extraction of selected teeth. **4.** You can wait until the patient is 20 years old to start the orthodontic treatment. This, however is less preferred as it could lead to an orthognathic surgical plan. A recent scientific journal concluded: "Even for experienced orthodontists, it is challenging to accurately predict the remaining growth of mandible when facing anterior crossbite in mixed dentition or early

permanent dentition. Treatment of skeletal crossbites remains a continuous challenge to the profession. Due to the diversity and variability in facial growth, accurate individualized growth prediction is not possible at the moment."

Doc gave Shimmy a friendly and confident pat on the back: "I do believe with confidence that with early treatment, it is likely that you can avoid surgery. So don't worry. I know that we can get you back to your healthy and handsome smile," said Doc.

The truth about Class 3 cases:

Class 3 cases are difficult but if treated correctly and early, it could mean the difference between a later touch up versus surgery.

*Stay tuned for the next episode of
The Orthodontic Myth Busters*

Dr. Eliyahu Gherman's main office is located in Ramat Bet Shemesh-A, Nachal Tamar 1 (02-992-3363, simchabraces@gmail.com). He also works in Rechavia (02-561-9780). We are always looking for the most comfortable, fastest and ideal way to give you a healthy and beautiful smile.

