Research Article

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Gnashing of Teeth

Ron Carlson

***Corresponding author**

Dr. RS Carlson, Private Practice, Carlson Bridge Technologies, Inc., Hawaiia, USA,
Tel : (808) 735-0282
Email : ddscarlson@hawaiiantel.net

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Life is filled with objects, things, strategies, devices, ploys that may be complex or simple. A common condition impacting not only the teeth but gumjawbone complex, temporal mandibular joint, muscles, tendons, ligaments and softtissues of the oral cavity is that of "gnashing of teeth." We in the honorable art and science of dentistry call this condition bruxism, tapping, jiggling or extra-oral movements (parafunctional habits) that may impede breathing, influence headache, or other super-pectoral painful conditions such as neuropathies. After 55 years of practice I have observed a huge rise in these condition in the past ten to fifteen years. Oral Bruxism condition is associated with snoring, clapping of teeth, airway compromise, and their attending effects—loss of sleep, quality of sleep as well as emotional implications.

Upper Airway Resistance Syndrome (UARS) is the condition identified from a medical view and, related to snoring, grinding of teeth, tapping, jiggling and has led many to devices such as an electrical stimulator called "Inspire" (figure 2.) which is alleged as an alternative to Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP—see figure 1.) that works inside your body while you sleep. It's a small electrical device placed during a same-day, outpatient procedure below the collar bone that monitors breathing and stimulates the tongue to reposition for better breathing, hopefully. Obstructive sleep apnea is the most common form of sleep apnea and occurs when the throat muscles relax and block the airway during sleep.

Of course, this is theory with some facts in logic, in my humble opinion. About 18 million American adults have moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnea.

Figure 1



Figure 2



Another approach in resolution of these condition are oral positioners as shown below, Figure 3 below. All of these devices are made of hard plastics that may cause more harm than good in my experience and estimation. They are often of novel colors to encourage acceptance of their many designs. Constructed to fit the upper arch and lower and work together they are complex and ill-fitting mostly.

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Figure. 3



As you may see the devices are large and are devoid of resilience, a key factor in therapy and wear-ability. They are cumbersome, awkward in design, harsh on the teeth and gums, may alter the occlusion (bite)and may impact adversely the temporal mandibular joint and associated muscles, tendons, ligaments, bone and soft tissue generally.

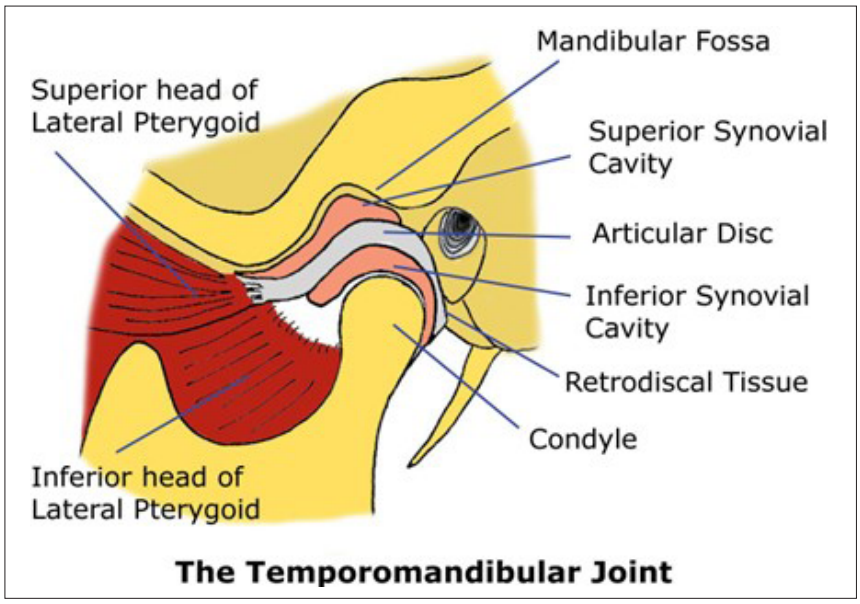
The oral positioners are challenging to wear on a consistent basis and of limited effectiveness. I do not advise these approaches since most people will not follow through with treatment due to their complex nature and inherent discomfort.

Carlson Oral Equilibrator

Without going into the deeper physiological reasons for avoiding complex and costly treatment strategies, I introduce a device that is simple, inexpensive and has the necessary resilience to be effective for whatever approach may be needed in resolution of oral facial challenges such as bruxism to UARS or CPAP.

Resilience is paramount in resolution of bruxism and other parafunctional oral habits. As we know the TMJ is composed of an articular disc and superior synovial cavity and an inferior synovial cavity surrounded by a capsule having resilience, as seen in figure 4. These tissue-complexes are soft and flexible in function easing stresses on the bone and teeth. Recall that the teeth anterior to the joint are intimately integrated (intercuspation) with cusps in teeth fossae, facial lingual inclines, marginal ridges not to mention the crowns, implants, bridges, and other restorations of those teeth.

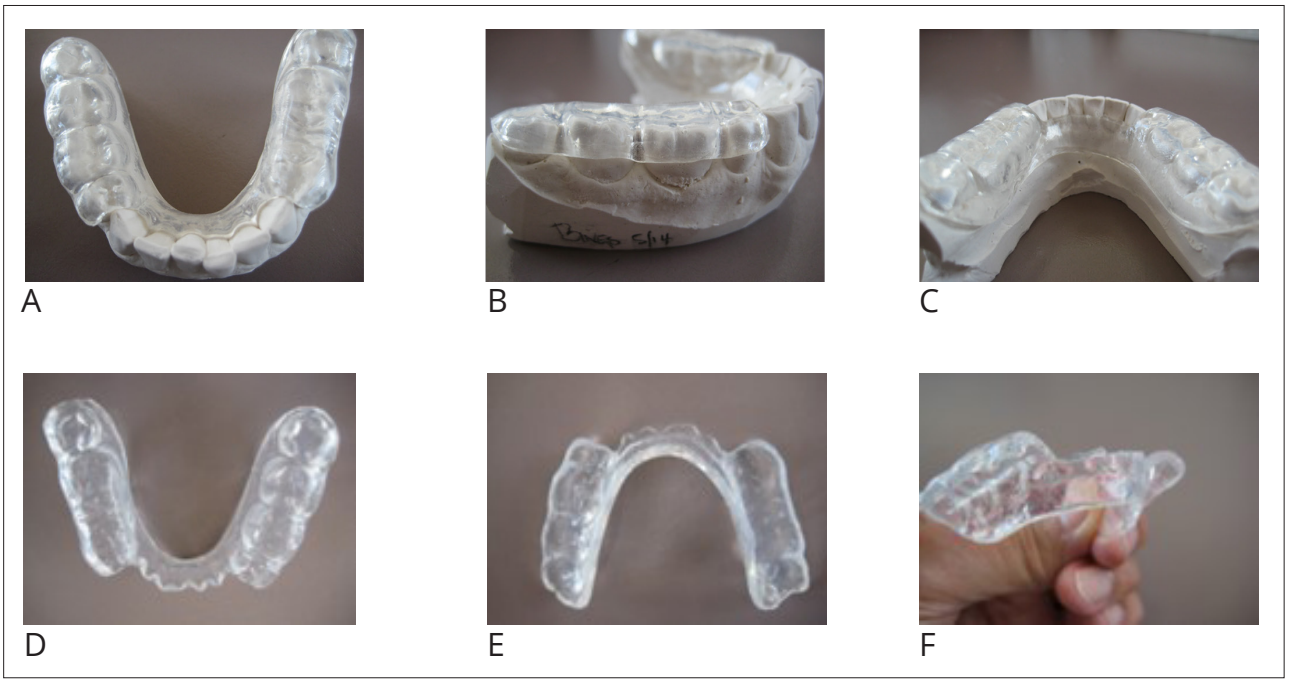
Figure 4



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We are familiar with the idea that maxillary and mandibular intercuspation determines the position and ultimate healthy function of the TMJ and its muscular ligamentous, soft, and skeletal tissues surrounding it. As I now understand it the various hard wired and keyed oral tooth positioners perpetuate or exacerbate the conditions they are designed to resolve.
Talk to the individuals who are using or have used these devices. Many give up due to a multitude or reasons or are left worse off than when first they started.

Figure 5. there are a series of six images of the Carlson Oral Equilibrator©:



The resilient thermoplastic molded device is seen above. It is constructed from a lower model of the individual's jaw. When fitted the material is easily shaped and adjusted with acrylic denture burrs. The only teeth covered are the lower posterior molars and bicuspids. Once in place the surfaces that will meet upper teeth (occlusal surfaces of COE©) can be equilibrated.
The question is "Does it work?" Yes, it does brilliantly in most cases. One of my patients calls it her "bumper" –will not sleep without it. Apt name, for it does cushion any attempt at tooth occlusion, protecting anterior teeth from excursions beyond the normal centric occlusion or in protrusive occlusion.
In protrusion with the COE© contact of teeth cannot be made. In swallowing, teeth are brought into maximum intercuspation between 1,500 to 2,000 times each day, at low loading, about 100 lbs. per inch squared. This is about 2 swallows a minute. With the abundance of disordered and disharmonized occlusions I observe in practice, these are leading triggers for bruxism and airway obstruction in the physical domain; there are also a plethora of triggers spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.
We are very aware of the social. political, religious, and philosophical conflicts in our world driving the fear of living diverting many from the joy of living. People feel this fear. And often deal with it by bruxation.
We are existing in a time of transition to a better world, I believe, yet met with the insanity of daily living such as debauchery, transhumanism and other such concepts. "Gnashing of teeth" means grinding one's teeth together, having one's teeth set on edge in determination, or biting down in pain, anguish, fear, sadness, or anger. Where does one find remedy and relief? I have my answer and it may be useful for you. Simplicity! And thus, the Carlson Oral Equilibrator© is that simplicity! It is important to impute or assign vibrations of words of good value into the COE© that may issue from one's conversation about the Smile Bumper.

What is meant by that is the following: clarifying the use of the Smile Bumper, as one lady had identified it, I noticed when one smiles teeth are apart, not touching upper to lower. So, I instructed that people receiving the COE need to smile when they use it during the day—and if they desire at night too! The patient replied, "for me to smile I must be happy" to which I retorted..." ok...then be happy when you use the bumper in your mouth." Immediately she smiled and said..." then I'll call this cushion plate my Happy Smile Bumper." I added good, do that and be happy...each time you use it think of something that makes you happy... turn on your happy, be happy. In a very physical way positive word association is in operation in the device, Happy Smile Bumper, and takes on a life of its own carrying that thought message, vibration and spiritual essence in itself. All this takes place at the mental level, the realm of Mind, but not limited to the Mental Cell Body.
The Gnashing of Teeth could be said to not only be a mis qualification of energy at the physical cell body level alone but be associated at the spiritual cell body and mental cell body

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levels too—one's relationship with Creator Lord God—Divine Truth, self or others.

It is not only reported by individuals utilizing the COE that they gain great relief from gnashing of teeth, but of headache, joint pain, jaw clicking, sore muscles, dizziness, eye focusing issues, breathing obstruction, apnea, and even relief from nightmares.

I care not what religion or spiritual practice one has or does not have. This relationship may always be improved upon by reminders in daily life such as a simple device as the oral orthotic cushion now known as the Happy Smile Bumper©. Trust and faith in Another Power (God) are essential in resolution of all of our challenges in the oral, facial, head, neck, and lower body issues cascading to the feet we use. Remember, smile often and be your smile with great gratitude, this will end bruxism and other issues well in my humble opinion.