

Dear Doctor and staff,

In the event that you are not familiar with orofacial myology therapy, I would like to provide the following information about the Nebraska Myofunctional Therapy office and the services which are available at that facility. Orofacial myology is a psycho-physiological program of therapeutic neuromuscular retraining. It involves retaining a full range of motion aimed at the establishment of a correct deglutition pattern and improved orofacial musculature. The treatment is a form of oral orthopedics and physical therapy of the face. These both serve to develop normal neuromusculature. The process is a complex one involving the coordination of many nerve and muscle groups. In the beginning stages of treatment, therapy is performed on a conscious level utilizing neuromuscular facilitation. As soon as possible, treatment moves to a more subconscious level where stabilization of muscle function and synchronization of deglutition are achieved.

Neuromuscular re-education training methods are used to facilitate behavior changes which are necessary for the individual patient. In most cases this will include (1) correct tongue and lip posture and pressure (2) development of extra and intra oral muscles allowing for normal functioning of deglutition (3) mastering of timing and rhythm of movement for a coordinated normal swallow (4) incidental correction of articulation of sibilants (5) elimination of habits contributing to the malalignment of the dentition (6) muscle rebalancing and habit therapy as it relates to TMD (7) establishment of nasal breathing patterns using diaphragm breathing, coordination of medical treatment and nasal hygiene. Behavioral modification techniques are incorporated into the structured program to stimulate motivation and long-term habituation of the desired adaptive behaviors. The majority of the patients seen at the clinic are referred because of abnormal development of the oral cavity as the result of prolonged mouth breathing which may concurrently extend the symptoms of Otitis media, tonsil infections and/or TMD pain.

The treatment is highly specialized and the plan is specifically individualized and carried out by a certified orofacial myologist in conjunction with other members of the patient's health team. These team members may include a/an general dentist, orthodontist, family physician, allergist, ENT doctor, or an oral surgeon. An orofacial myologist is a highly trained specialist with a degree in a related field such as dentistry, speech pathology, or other allied health professions. My own background includes a bachelor's degree in dental hygiene with the additional public health license, a master's degree in human resource and family science, and a certificate in gerontology. I am also board certified in Orofacial Myology through the International Association of Orofacial Myology with certificate number 175-C-12.

The average length of treatment is approximately four months of intensive therapy and then gradually phased out recalls over a period of a year and a half to ensure maintenance of the correct behaviors. The condition for which patients are referred to orofacial myology therapy is classified in the ICD-9 as 524.59 (dentofacial functional abnormalities) and 787.21 (dysphagia- oral phase) and the CPT codes often used are 97112, 97110 and 97530. The therapy is usually covered under medical insurance as it has a medical etiology. The CPT number is the same as physical therapy, and if the patients' insurance provides for physical therapy, orofacial therapy should also be covered. These procedures are neither strictly educational nor behavioral but a combination of neuromuscular rehabilitation techniques.

During the past five years I have been blessed with many opportunities to share my knowledge through presenting programs to local dental study clubs, at state dental meetings and office lunch and learns. All courses are approved by the Nebraska Board of Dentistry. Please let me know if you are interested in an office presentation on orofacial myofunctional disorders, and to serve as an adjunct to you with your muscular TMD patients. It would be a pleasure to arrange a visit to your office or have you visit mine.

I look forward to many more years of providing professional services in central and eastern Nebraska and assisting your patients. Enclosed are a few business cards and brochures to share with your office colleagues and patients. Please contact me should you have any questions.

With professional regards,

Pat Brinkman-Falter, BSDH, MS, PHRDH, COM
Certified Orofacial Myologist