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Functional Approaches to Interceptive Orthodontics: The Importance of Nasal Breathing and Tongue Posture

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Interceptive orthodontics is an important stage in the evaluation of the growing child. At this stage, the clinician's goal is not only to examine the position of the teeth, but also to identify, as early as possible, the functional factors that may influence the development of the oral cavity, the dental arches, and the overall balance of the orofacial system.

Among these factors, nasal breathing and tongue posture play an essential role. Normal nasal breathing helps maintain muscular balance and creates better conditions for healthy maxillary growth. At the same time, when the tongue rests naturally against the palate, it supports the development of the dental arches and contributes to stable occlusion.

When these functions are altered, changes in both the shape and function of the mouth may gradually occur. Mouth breathing, a low tongue posture, atypical swallowing, and poor lip seal should not be considered simple habits, but clinical signs that should be recognized early and carefully monitored during growth.

In this context, the combined use of a nasal device and a lingual device may provide useful support during interceptive treatment. The nasal device is designed to encourage nasal breathing and help the patient develop a more natural breathing pattern. The lingual device helps guide the tongue toward its correct resting position against the palate, supporting the recovery of normal oral function.

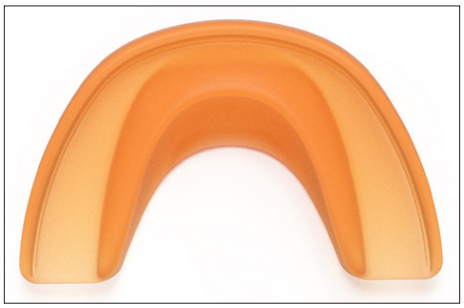
Eq. Eptamed Balancers are soft, non-invasive elastodontic devices designed to promote functional balance between the dental arches, the orofacial muscles, the tongue, and the mandible. Their goal is not only to improve dental alignment, but also to support stable function while respecting the child's natural growth and development.

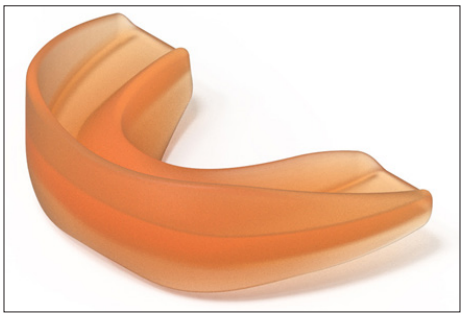
A clinical example is represented by Rebecca, who initiated treatment at the age of eight and completed it at the age of ten. The therapeutic protocol began with a one-month functional phase using the **Eq. Nasal** and **Eq. Niki**, in combination with a structured program of active myofunctional exercises designed to support nasal breathing, reduce perioral muscle hyperactivity, and facilitate the development of a physiological swallowing pattern. This initial phase was intended to establish favorable neuromuscular conditions before the orthodontic intervention. Subsequently, treatment continued with the **Eq. Eptamed C3P Young Orange**, the functional orthodontic device shown in the clinical photographs. The appliance was prescribed for two hours of daytime wear in association with active functional exercises, followed by overnight use to provide continuous orthopedic and neuromuscular stimulation. The pre- and post-treatment records demonstrated significant improvements in smile esthetics, dental arch coordination, and occlusal balance. These clinical findings illustrate how the integration of myofunctional rehabilitation with functional orthodontic therapy may support physiological craniofacial development, optimize neuromuscular function, and contribute to long-term functional and occlusal stability.

From this point of view, treatment should not be seen simply as a way to correct tooth position, but as a guide for healthy craniofacial growth. Nasal breathing, tongue posture, muscular balance, and dental arch development are closely related and should always be evaluated together.

The main advantage of this approach is the possibility of early intervention, while the craniofacial structures are still developing and function can influence growth. Treatment therefore becomes not only corrective but also educational, helping the child learn to breathe through the nose, maintain the tongue in the correct position, and develop a more balanced oral function.

In conclusion, modern interceptive orthodontics should always include the evaluation of nasal breathing and tongue posture. Early recognition of functional changes offers children the opportunity for healthier, more stable, and more harmonious craniofacial development.





Balanced Smile Depends Not Only on Well-Aligned Teeth, but also on Efficient Nasal Breathing, Correct Tongue Posture, and Coordinated Oral Function.

References

1. Samuele Cova (2011) Graduated in Dentistry and Dental Prosthetics from the University of Verona, Italy.