

What happened to our Airways?

This is part 2 of our five-part series. Our continuation of Airway health...
A Path to wellness.

Guiderland, NY - It's clear: In today's western world, jaws are narrower and pushed back, noses are pushed in, and faces are longer and narrower-all typical results from a lack of breastfeeding, soft diets, and mouth breathing. These facial characteristics coincide with a rounded, forward shoulder posture as well as a forward head posture. A jaw that does not develop forward during childhood will often continue to recede throughout life. Interestingly, an attractive face and an open Airway go hand in hand. A healthy face grows proportionally, as well as balanced in both the forward direction and horizontally

When we go back over 12,000 years our ancestors lived in nature hunting and gathering their food. As humanity developed agriculture, humans began to eat a "softer" diet. Researchers such as Boyd and Lieberman have been studying prehistoric and modern skulls. They noticed the soft diet eliminated the natural chewing, and this began to change the shapes of our faces: narrowing our jaws and creating restrictions in our airways.

Smaller jaws leave less room for teeth, causing crowding. They also leave less room for the tongue, forcing it to move backwards, especially during sleep, where it tends to block the airway. With smaller faces and narrower jaws have also come smaller nasal openings in the back of the mouth.

In the last 200 years since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution and particularly in the last 35 years our faces generally have flattened and narrowed even more making nasal breathing difficult and causing airway-centered disorders. While genetics can play a role, many epigenetic factors have contributed to this narrowing of our airways. Breastfeeding of infants was one factor in normal facial development because of the newborn's sucking action during breast feeding which develops muscles critical to proper Airway development. Another factor was that since the 1980s on, the demand for fast foods rapidly expanded. With changes in our diets and a lack of chewing (raw vegetables, for instance), the natural mechanisms for creating healthy jaws and Airways have been inhibited. On top of that, yet another factor, we have added thousands of industrial chemicals into our environment in the last five decades.

The results of all these epigenetic effects of our modern Lifestyles is a perfect storm for children's health involving allergies, sinusitis, mouth breathing, snoring, sleep apnea and other forms of sleep-disordered breathing. It can hardly be coincidental that since the early 1980s when our epigenetic exposures increased exponentially - obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease rates have increased alarmingly, as have behavioral and learning disorders like ADHD.

The time has come for an airway Centric approach to dentistry and Orthodontics so that we widen jaws and open airways and prevent or reverse the challenges of epigenetic factors. Our ability to breathe, sleep, stay healthy, and function at our best in life depends on an open airway.

Over the next three months I'll talk about the Airway Centric Solution, Kids: Breathing, Learning, and Sleeping and Your Child's Face: Preventing Life-Long Problems.



 **OSHINS OF SMILES**
FAMILY & AESTHETIC DENTISTRY

(518) 356-5635

www.OshinsofSmiles.com

3905 Carman Rd., Guiderland

ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS