

IMPROPER BITE CAN WEAR DOWN TEETH

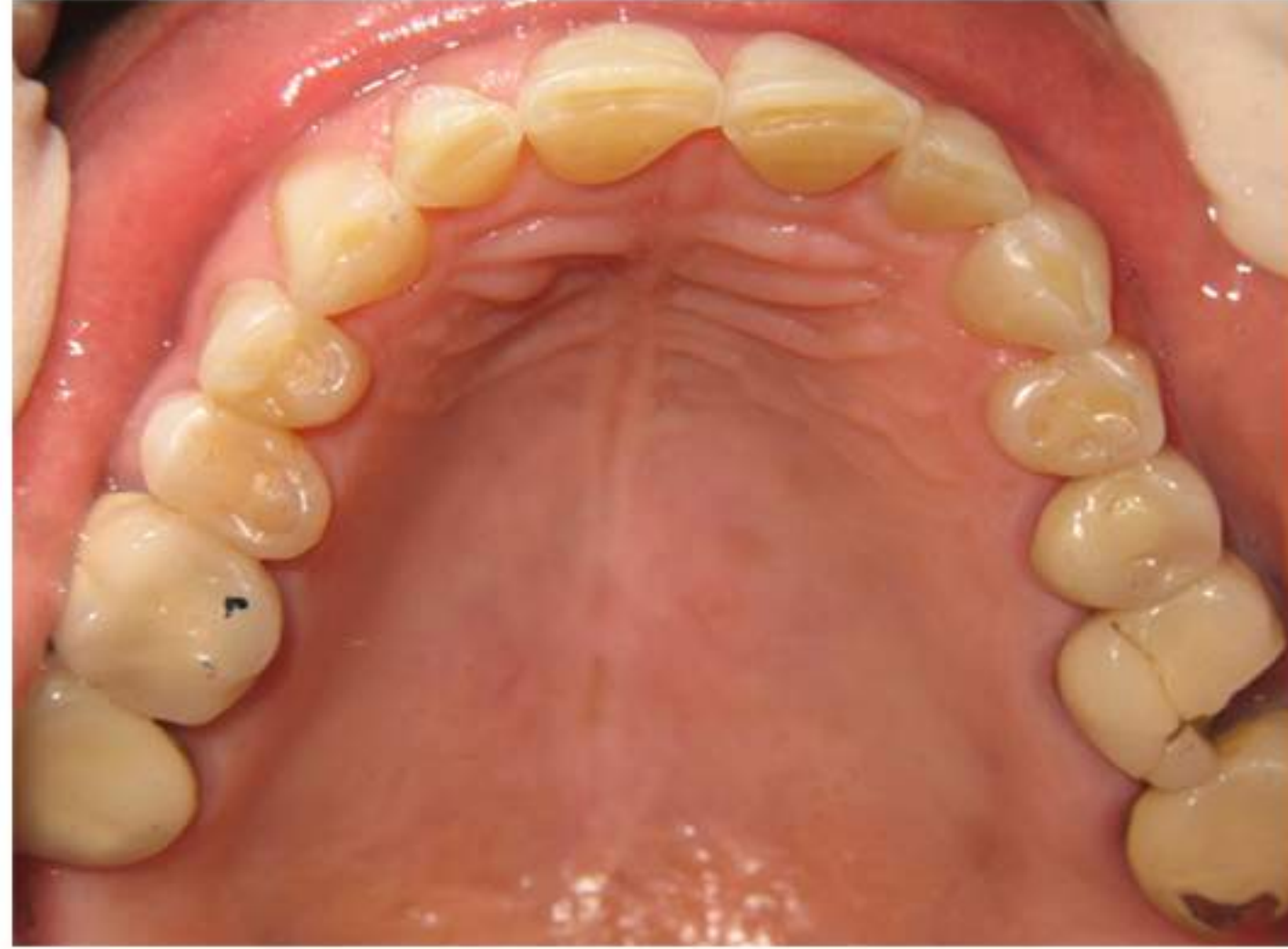
Aside from an accident, there are three ways a person can lose teeth: decay, gum disease and the way teeth fit together, also referred to as one's bite.

It is easy to understand the decay and gum disease process. Without good oral health, decay causes holes in teeth, while people with gum disease have bleeding gums and disappearing bone. With good oral hygiene and a maintenance program with a dentist, it is easy to prevent both of these factors.

Bite problems are more difficult to see and understand, but there is no doubt that if the teeth don't come together correctly and the person is a grinder or clincher, something has to give. Imagine a beautiful home that is built on an uneven foundation, despite the maintenance the dweller can put into it, ultimately the person will start to see cracks and damage that will occur over time.

For the sake of this article, let's call the patient in these images Mary. She is a middle-aged female who has spent a lot of time and money to prevent decay and gum disease, yet her teeth did not fit together properly in her mouth and she was prone to heavy grinding.

Over time, Mary unknowingly ground down more than 50 percent of her natural teeth (as shown in the pictures above). The first picture is her natural smile (what she sees) and the rest are what we call retracted views (what we see).



Photos By Dr. Pamela Marzban

In order to fix this situation, every tooth will need to be crowned and restored to the correct bite. Finding the correct bite is absolutely essential for any long-lasting results. If Mary's bite is not corrected, the same wear will take place and she will literally break her new porcelain teeth the same way she did her own natural teeth.

This much wear can cause pain while eating and extreme sensitivity to hot and cold. It can cause existing dental work and natural teeth to break. Obviously, if something doesn't change, her teeth will soon be worn down to the gum line.

We found Mary's correct bite through a process called *Neuromuscular Dentistry*. We mimic her new good bite (her physiologic bite) by creating an oral orthotic that postures her jaw in this position. This gives her an opportunity to "test drive"

her bite to see if it is comfortable and provides a means for us make sure she won't grind her teeth in the posture. If the bite is wrong, you simply take the orthotic out and everything is back to the way it was and you start over. This step is essential and totally reversible.

Once we knew the bite was right, it was time to move to the final stage...creating teeth that keep her in this comfortable, physiologic, neuromuscular position; hence, crowning each and every tooth in Mary's mouth. We used the latest all porcelain crowns for the final restorations. There is **no metal** in this restorative material.

The results are obvious and dramatic (as shown in the pictures on the left). Mary now has a smile she can show off and more importantly, she can chew food normally and without pain or sensitivity.

Modern dentistry can be a life changing event.



Photos By Dr. Pamela Marzban



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