Literary Review

A review of: Diagnosis and Treatment of Bruxism: A Review of the Literature, by Steven J. Gallagher (1980)

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Suggested Citation

Pierce, R. B. (1980). A review of: Diagnosis and Treatment of Bruxism: A Review of the Literature, by Steven J. Gallagher (1980). *International Journal of Orofacial Myology*, 6(3), 15.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52010/ijom.1980.6.3.4>

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"Diagnosis And Treatment Of Bruxism: A Review Of The Literature"

Steven J. Gallagher, D.D.S., M.S.

General Dentistry, Volume 28, Number 2, March-April, 1980, pp. 62-65

This article does what the title says; it presents a review of the literature on bruxism. The author cites numerous references regarding the etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of bruxism.

Etiology

Although many causative factors have been hypothesized over the years, four principal categories have been outlined: (1) local factors such as occlusal trauma, faulty restorations, and cuspal interferences. (2) systemic factors such as gastrointestinal disturbances, allergies, and endocrine disorders. (3) psychological factors including tension, aggression, and fear, and (4) occupational factors, such as jobs which involve a great deal of stress or precision activity.

Diagnosis

The large majority of patients are not aware that they are grinding or clenching their teeth. The dentist should suspect bruxism when there is abnormal or excessive wear, powerful muscles of mastication, widening of the periodontal ligaments, exaggerated alveolar bone loss, temporomandibular joint pain and/or clicking, among other symptoms. Gallagher reports several methods for detecting and quantifying bruxism.

Therapy

The treatment of choice will be based on the etiology and diagnosis established by the dentist through a thorough examination and evaluation.

Treatment approaches most often described in the literature are categorized as follows:

1. Occlusal adjustment
2. Splints and bite guards
3. Psychotherapy, autosuggestion, habit change
4. Drug therapy

There are forty-five references which would provide a core bibliography for professionals interested in learning more about bruxism.

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