

Spinal Health Vs Oral Health

by Michel Tetrault, DC

It is widely accepted in society that Oral Hygiene, keeping your teeth and gums healthy and in good condition or repair, is important; but the same cannot be said for Spinal Hygiene. So the question to ask the reader is: *“Which is more important to you and your family, oral hygiene or spinal hygiene?”*

This article will examine that question with the only four possible answers:

1. *Both are equally important*
2. *Neither is important at all*
3. *Oral Health is more important*
4. *Spinal Health is more important*

1 As chiropractic and its focus on spinal health is not new, since the profession has been around in America for over 110 years, it seems proper that those with even minimal exposure to chiropractic or spinal evaluations would place equal importance on both areas of personal health & hygiene.

2 It is truthful to say that there are many people that do not place a high value on personal hygiene at all, so for these people it would be safe to assume their answer would be that “neither” topic would come into mind in their daily lifestyles. Sad but true.

3 The Public Health system has done an excellent job in partnering and supporting the message of Oral Hygiene. TV commercials selling products such as toothpaste, toothbrushes and mouthwash are almost daily reminders that reinforce what every child was taught in the early years of school of the importance of brushing and flossing.

The Public Health system puts very little attention to the spine except when there is concern for scoliosis in children, so the spine is largely overlooked unless there are gross deformities that cannot be ignored where surgery is often the only option offered. Easy to understand why the greatest majority of the world’s populations do place oral health above spinal health.

4 Chiropractic has been advocating a seemingly secret policy on spinal health for over 110 years but, unlike dental care that has commercial products to advertise daily in the media, chiropractic has not been favored much by the media and therefore this important message has not been widely spread in the conventional media. We get our teeth checked, our eyes checked, our blood and blood pressure checks regularly, but having everyone thinking about getting their spine checked is a different matter.

The truth is that in the event that one loses the battle with Oral Hygiene, the worst case scenario is to live out the rest of life without teeth. But, since we need to eat there are appliances that can be custom-made and fit into the mouth to replace the role of teeth, these are dentures; and then you would never have to see a Dentist the rest of your natural life.

On the other hand, when you lose the battle against Spinal Hygiene, the devastating truth is that you can look forward to a life of pain, of increasing disability, arthritis, degenerative disc disease, numbness, painful neuritis, and deformity of the spine and posture. **VERY DIFFERENT CONSEQUENCES INDEED!**

In conclusion, it is hoped that this article will increase the public’s perception and value on spinal health and toward the promise of raising the public awareness how **good posture** is very important; definitely more valuable than just pursuing a good smile. All national authorities in public health awareness need to incorporate a campaign on Spinal Health to transform this neglected area of personal hygiene over the coming decades.