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Role of orthodontist in cleft lip and palate

Cleft lip and palate is one of the most common congenital anomalies occurring round the world varying with the race, ethnicity and geography. Cleft lip and/or palate problems tends to worsen as the individual grows older. Although it occurs as a different entity in itself but its presence can hamper aesthetics as well as functions by effecting growth, dentition, speech, hearing and overall appearance resulting in social and psychological problems for the child as well as the parents. Cleft lip and palate is of a multifactorial origin such as inheritance, teratogenic drugs, and nutritional deficiencies and can also occur as syndromic or non-syndromic cleft. Treatment of Cleft Lip and Palate comprises of different specialists having an individual insight in a particular case ultimately reaching to a consensus for a successful culmination of the treatment. Although appropriate timing and method of each intervention is still arguable. An orthodontist plays a role in pre surgical maxillary orthopaedics, in aligning the maxillary segments and dentition, in preparation for secondary alveolar bone grafting and finally in obtaining ideal dental relation and preparing the dentition for prosthetic rehabilitation or orthognathic surgery if required. Therefore, for efficient treatment outcome and refinement of individual techniques or variations of the treatment protocol a highly able team of specialists from different specialities is a must, preferably on a multicentre basis.