Early orthodontic treatment and oral health-related quality of life

Relationship confirmed by University of Sheffield’s School of Clinical Dentistry study

By DTI

SHEFFIELD, UK: In Western countries like the UK, between 10 and 20 per cent of adolescents undergo orthodontic measures in some form. A recent meta-analysis conducted by researchers at the University of Sheffield’s School of Clinical Dentistry has indicated that treatment in those younger years may have a measurable impact on a person’s oral health-related quality of life (OHRQoL).

In their review, they found that levels of emotional and social well-being concerning OHRQoL improved moderately in patients who were treated orthodontically before they were 18 years old. The findings are relevant, because, until now, there has been little evidence that treatment actually improves OHRQoL.

The researchers included data from over a dozen studies reporting outcomes before and after orthodontic treatment that were conducted within the last ten years in countries like Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Italy, the UK and the US. Of these, four were finally selected for using similar questionnaires to measure what young people thought about their teeth and how their dental appearance affected their life, before and after orthodontic treatment. All showed measurable and moderately large improvement in the areas of emotional and social well-being, according to the researchers.

The study revealed first evidence that orthodontic treatment in early age improves oral health-related quality of life. (© Nina Buday/Shutterstock.com)

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