

Tongue Thrust

Have you ever told your child to “close your mouth and stop catching flies” particularly when they are watching T.V.?

- *Are they messy eaters?*
- *Did they suck their thumb or other objects up to a late age?*
- *Do they have a lisp or other pronunciation difficulties?*
- *Do they have dental problems such as an overbite or openbite?*

All these factors can indicate a pattern known as a **tongue thrust swallow**. Tongue thrusting is a way of swallowing. During the swallow the tongue pushes against the front teeth or through the upper and lower teeth. Almost all infants swallow this way. Most children by the age of seven have developed an adult swallowing pattern. There are a variety of reasons why some children do not.

***REMEMBER** - Instead of telling your children to close their mouths or to stop being a messy eater, please contact a Speech Pathologist*

Things to look for:

If your child suffers from any of the following then they may be at risk of developing “abusive” swallowing patterns.

- prolonged thumb sucking
- enlarged tonsils or adenoids
- allergies
- poor muscle control
- upper respiratory tract infections or a high, narrow palate.

A tongue thrust swallow may contribute to dental problems, pronunciation difficulties and / or malformations of the jaw.

An average person swallows 600 to 2000 times a day. A tongue thrust swallow exerts 2kg of pressure on your teeth every time you swallow. *This can cause a lot of damage in your mouth.*

Your child must be taught to swallow a new way with the tongue moving up and back in the mouth. We therefore need to retrain the muscles involved in swallowing.

A Speech Pathologist can assess, diagnose and treat a tongue thrust swallow.

Initially your child may be observed to be a mouth breather and have some pronunciation difficulties particularly with the “s” and “z” sounds. On further assessment a tongue thrust swallow pattern may be evident. It is recommended to treat the swallow pattern first, which may help with accurate pronunciation and correction of dental problems.

The tongue thrust program focuses on correct position of the mouth at rest, increasing muscular strength of the “chewing” muscles and developing a new swallowing pattern.

Children of the age of 7 years make the best use of the program. However, there is no age limit, motivated teenagers and adults can quickly work through the program, though they may have to overcome strong habits.

What to do:

Contact us at Tyquin group Speech Pathology to discuss correcting a Tongue Thrust and how to develop a normal swallowing pattern.

About Tyquin group

Tyquin group is a professional clinic containing a practice of Speech Pathology and a Reading Clinic .

As speech pathologists, we are working toward helping the 14% of Australians that have a communication disability. In order to do this we actively promote not only our practice but the profession as a whole.

Language and Communication sciences over recent years have made enormous advances. Unfortunately there is little awareness of the large and diverse role that Speech Pathologists can play in the support and education of our young learning children.

In our Reading Clinic, we aim to help poor readers when other attempts have failed. We willingly explore the best technology on offer anywhere in the world. We also develop techniques to use in concert with this technology in order to achieve the most effective results.

Philosophically we strive to achieve results quickly. Though this is sometimes ambitious and not always possible, we believe that it is a worthy goal.

Tyquin group invites you to regard us as a point of contact for further information about any queries you may have.

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Tongue Thrust

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