

TMD and Orthodontics Consensus Conference

XX Italian Society of Orthodontics (SIDO) International Congress

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Chaired by Drs G. B. Garino, R. Giorgetti, and L. Favero, and hosted by Prof S. Palla, the widely advertised consensus conference on the relationship between temporomandibular diseases/disorders (TMD) and orthodontics took place in southern Italy at the end of the fall.

The event reminded me of similar programs held in North America about a decade ago. The auditorium was packed; emotions were running high. The audience was asked to draw the line between fact and fiction. My impression was that the views of the attendees were anything but unified.

The plenary session featured 7 speakers and ended with a roundtable discussion that focused on questions submitted by the audience and presented to the panel by Prof S. Palla. The first speaker, Dr F. Magni, emphasized occlusal finishing prior to final debonding, allowing time for the physiologic settling of individual teeth. After tooth settling and debonding, he advocated yearly occlusal equilibration to maintain stability and prevent occlusal dysfunction. He ended his talk by pointing out that although these measures may sound like overkill, it is "better [to be] safe than sorry ...!" Dr A. Ferro, the second speaker, addressed the role of occlusion in cranio-cervical disorders and presented preliminary, unpublished data. Dr R. Schiavoni reminded the audience of the need to understand TMD in a biopsychosocial context rather than as a pure mechanical phenomenon. The second part of his presentation

dealt with the collapse of the posterior vertical dimension and its relationship with the anterior guidance. Dr C. De Nuccio addressed again finalization of the occlusion following orthodontic treatment, taking a more conservative view than the first speaker. Dr G. Cozzani, the fifth presenter, was again philosophically aligned with some of the ideas presented by the first speaker. He emphasized orthopedic principles that were centered on the need for axial loading. The next speaker, C. Buccelli, dealt with the legal issues relevant to TMD, emphasizing some of the medico-legal scenarios encountered by the orthodontist. The final speaker of the session was a treat. Prof S. Palla applied the principles of the scientific method, separating myths from facts. He concluded that although some expert opinion may assign a causal role to the occlusion in the development of TMD, cited data in support of such expert positions are based on incorrect interpretations.

The subsequent roundtable discussion had some heated moments and fell short of reaching a consensus statement. After leaving the conference, I had my doubts as to whether the event cleared up the long-standing controversy regarding the relationship between the occlusion, TMD, and orthodontics.

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