Introduction and Objectives

The smile is considered aesthetic when it presents a harmonious relationship between the shape and color of the teeth, as well as a good proportion and framing between the lip and gum. An excessive gingival display during the smile is considered an undesirable aesthetic alteration and often leads patients to orthodontic consultation.

Gummy smile represents an important aesthetic complaint during orthodontic anamnesis and changes the spontaneity of facial expression. A gingival display greater than 2 mm in the smile is classified as a gummy smile. The objective of this work is to identify the etiology, classification and treatments described in the literature of the gummy smile.

Methods

This literature review was carried out in the Pubmed, B-on, Scielo and Science Direct databases, using the combination of the terms "gummy smile", "excessive gingival display" and "lip repositioning surgery". We selected 17 articles published between 1996 and 2017.

Results

Etiological factors:
- Upper dental/leveled protrusion;
- Maxillary skeletal vertical excess;
- Dental extrusion and/or altered passive eruption;
- Hyperactivity of the upper lip muscles;
- Infectious and/or drug gingival hypertrophy;
- Morphonfunctional characteristics of the upper lip.

The gummy smile can be caused by a set of these factors.

Fig. 1: Representative scheme of the determinants for the correct treatment of the gummy smile.

A multidisciplinary team, involving Orthodontics, Periodontology, Oral Rehabilitation, Maxillofacial Surgery and Plastic Surgery, is necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of gummy smile, when the etiology is multifactorial.

Conclusions

The study and the careful evaluation of the etiology and degree of gummy smile severity are determinant in the selection of the treatment. The etiology of the gummy smile can be multifactorial, however there are cases in which it is possible to identify an isolated etiological factor.

The patient has the final word in the therapeutic option, so we must explain to the patient clearly all the appropriate treatment options for his case, exposing all the advantages and disadvantages of each therapeutic approach.

Clinical Implications

References

12. - Seixas MR, Pinto ARC and Araújo TM. Checklist of esthetic aspects to be considered in the diagnosis and treatment of gummy smile, when the etiology is multifactorial. A multidisciplinary team, involving Orthodontics, Periodontology, Oral Rehabilitation, Maxillofacial Surgery and Plastic Surgery, is necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of gummy smile, when the etiology is multifactorial.

Table 1: Classification of excess gingival display and associated treatment options.

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