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Critical Argument Paper #1

The Beauty Trend of Mewing

In recent years, one has seen the use of mewing, also known as orthotropics, have become a trend in the beauty world. Mewing has become a popular practice in order to achieve a defined jawline which can be done by pressing the tongue to the roof of the mouth. In order to do this practice correctly, one must follow these steps: start by relaxing your mouth so that your lips and teeth are touching, step two: keep your lips and teeth together as you lift your tongue and lightly press it against the roof of your mouth, and step three: maintain this tongue position whenever possible throughout the day and even while you sleep. There are some that suggest that you can find the right position if you try to make the “ng” sound, as in “thing” or “wing”, while others suggest you focus on breathing out of your nose instead of your mouth. This technique properly aligns the tongue in order to reposition a jaw without someone going through a surgery. There have been some questions as to if this practice can be proven to work for long term results or for just for a temporary use when taking pictures. There are some who have said that they have seen results in just a couple of months, but others say it takes years. Not only can this practice change the jawline, but it can also help with relieving jaw muscle pain, mouth breathing, double chin, sinusitis, speech disorders, swallowing issues and snoring. It is also said that it can help straighten teeth by restructuring the jaw.

Mewing has become a recent trend by beauty influencers on TikTok and Youtube. According to PopSugar (Rodriguez, 2022), the hashtag #mewing has 1.9 billion views and

counting on TikTok alone, and users on the platform claim that practicing the technique has helped define their jawlines and even reshape their faces entirely. A reason mewing might be so popular is that the practice is so simple but promises big results. People are becoming more interested in finding other ways to make themselves look younger. According to Vogue (Coates, 2020), a defined jawline could suggest youth and vitality and it is the scaffolding for the entire face which when ensured, can help the skin remain lifted for longer. People have often done massages in the face such as the Gua Sha in order to achieve the desired look of their jawline. As trends usually start with the influences of celebrities, Kim Kardashian, Hailey Bieber, Bella Hadid and Jennifer Lopez are among the celebrities that are mewing in photos. Although, the practice is more prevalent among men. Having a visible jawline is considered a very masculine trait and the practice would help achieve an attractive appearance.

Mewing comes from British orthodontist John Mew who promoted this practice in the 90s. He and his son, fellow orthodontist Michael Mew, promoted a form of orthodontics they call “orthotropics” that focuses on “jaw posture” including retraining the position of the tongue. Recently, Britain’s General Dental Council stripped the elder John Mew of his dental license. According to (Frysh, 2023), John and Michael Mew did not coin the term “mewing.” It stemmed from an online movement among people who wanted to change the appearance of their jawlines using ideas from orthotropics, which was originally intended mostly for young children whose jaws are still growing. According to Dr. John Mew, who originated the mewing technique in the 1970s, and his son Dr. Mike Mew, people today have smaller jaws than our ancestors. They credit this to environmental and lifestyle factors, like allergies that lead to mouth breathing and ready access to food that’s soft and easy to chew. A smaller jaw leaves teeth crowded and thus, crooked. It also contributes to a less aesthetically pleasing face, the Mews say. The two argue

that practicing mewing can fix this by realigning the teeth and making the jaw larger, stronger, and more squared (Burch, 2023). According to the Mews, by strengthening facial muscle tone, mewing expands and sharpens the jawline, and promotes a more "ideal" size relationship between the nose and chin. If mewing is done properly, it is as unlikely to do any harm, but if done improperly, mewing may come with risks. Improper mewing could lead to the same problems that it is purported to treat, such as: misaligned teeth, misaligned bite, pain in the jaw joints and surrounding muscles and ligaments, loose teeth, speech problems, and swallowing issues. The American Association of Orthodontists does not recommend unsupervised attempts to alter teeth or bite alignment, mewing included (Burch, 2023).

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