

**Does Your Child  
Suck Her Thumb?  
Does Your  
Child Breathe  
Through His  
Mouth or Lisp  
When He Talks?**

**Thumb sucking can affect  
breathing, speech, chewing,  
swallowing, and even cause  
more serious issues.**

**There is a solution.**

**East Texas Orofacial Myology**

Misty Bridges, OM  
**903-245-8667**  
www.tylerom.com

# Help for Thumb Sucking Children

**T**humbsucking is one of the most difficult battles that parents and children face. It is proven that serotonin is released during thumbsucking to provide a feeling of relaxation and well-being. A habit or dysfunction that interferes with proper development of the orofacial muscles can lead to poor development of speech, chewing or swallowing, poor table manners, and mouth breathing. It is often difficult to identify one source or cause of the problem. Many disorders can be the result of prolonged mouth breathing due to a restricted airway, allergies, or structural abnormalities. Incorrect positioning of the tongue during rest may contribute to improper orofacial development and misaligned teeth.

Myofunctional therapy or orofacial myology is treatment of thumb/finger sucking, tongue thrust, pacifier habits, mouth breathing, open mouth postures and oral motor behavior. It uses a positive approach aimed at coordination of muscle groups for normal swallowing using an exercise regimen. When the tongue and facial muscles are retrained to proper function and placement, this promotes proper growth and development of the skeletal and dental structures. The age of treatment varies with the child. Some can be helped as young as three years or age, but more success is achieved around age five. Usually the peer pressure of friends will be a big motivation to eliminate the habit. Most children can alter their thumbsucking in 1-2 days. Tongue-thrusting (speaking with a lisp) will take several phases of treatment to create new neuromuscular patterns. Studies show that therapy is 80-90% effective with proper compliance of the patient.

Contact Misty Bridges, OM at EAST TEXAS OROFACIAL MYOLOGY in Tyler; phone 903-245-8667 or go to www.tylerom.com

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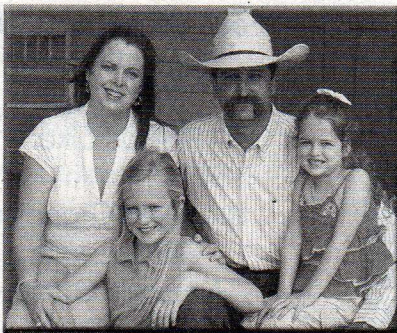
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