

## THE SAMUEL D. HARRIS LECTURE

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### EARLY TREATMENT OF MALOCCLUSION

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#### Principles and Rationale for Early Treatment

The following are specific reasons to consider early treatment intervention of a malocclusion for a given patient. These are goals that can be achieved with early treatment, and are objectives that could be more difficult or impossible to achieve when a "treat later" philosophy is followed. Since priorities for individual patients would vary, the following factors are not listed in order of importance:

- Compliance
- Enhance the ability to function optimally
- Psychological implications (esthetics)
- Enhance the ability to grow and compensate optimally
- Opportunities for the clinician to modify treatment methods based on treatment response, and not panic because growth and/or compliance are being exhausted
- Assist in avoiding surgery (surgical risk), or decrease the amount of surgery (relapse factor) necessary at a later date
- Extractions of permanent teeth will be less likely (multi-factorial)
- Ability to achieve orthopedic change (advantage of growth/compensation)
- Stability (decrease the severity of the malocclusion)
  - create adequate space for the dentition to erupt during growth
  - allow growth, adaptation, and compensation to enhance stability of the anterior/posterior (Cl.II or CL. III component)
  - not allow excess vertical growth total expression
  - secondary dental effects