

## Is Your Food Chewing Balanced on Both the Sides of Your Mouth???

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Oral health from the eyes of a 24-year-old dentist, running her own private practice with the aim of spreading oral health awareness as far as i can.

About chewing your food wrong - in my clinical experience i have seen many patients chewing only from one side of their mouth and complaining about jaw pain, decay and bone loss, etc.

### What is balance?

BALANCE is an even distribution of weight.

If you go out of balance, there will always be a bad effect.

### Take a minute while chewing your food and observe:

Are you chewing from both the sides equally?

Do you feel one side of your mouth cannot take load as much as your other side?

Do you experience jaw pain while chewing?

All these are side effects of an unbalanced occlusion and unbalanced chewing habits.

Humans happen to avoid keeping balance in most of the things which affect their career as well as their health.

Effects of not chewing food from both the sides - unbalanced chewing habits;

1. More load only on one side of the mouth.
2. The side which is not being used will start becoming weak.
3. Muscle atrophy of the side you are not chewing your food from.
4. Decaying of teeth in the side not being used for chewing and gum infections.

### More load only on one side of your mouth

You must have experienced weakness in the side of the body you rarely use example: right from brushing in the morning till brushing in the night most of our chores are done with the right hand and for our lefty friends with the left hand.

The side we put all the load on is tolerating all the forces and the latter is just sitting there going into spasm every now and then.

Similarly, when you chew from one side, besides the overload will also cause your teeth to start wearing off with time, leading to loosening of your teeth, gingival recession, bone loss, facial asymmetry, etc.

- o The side not being used will start getting weak

If you touch your cheeks while keeping the jaws clamped, and notice that there is a definite difference between left and right, you can be pretty sure that you have an imbalance of the right and left side of your mouth and that you find it difficult to chew from the side you have used the least because it feels weak now

- o Muscle atrophy in the side of mouth not being used



**Figure 1**

Muscles of the face - masseter, temporalis, medial and lateral pterygoid.

Chewing from only one side of the mouth can cause tightening of the muscles of other side which is not being used leading to jaw pain.

- o Decaying of teeth in the side not being used for chewing and gum infections.



Figure 2

The side not being used to chew food will be affected by debris, plaque, calculus and decay, since food is not being chewed on that side there is no cleansing action happening leading to accumulation of bacteria.

### Solution

If you experience issues with any of your teeth because of which you tend to chew only from one side of your mouth, you need to consult your dentist before your spoil your oral health because of a few teeth issues, get it corrected soonest.

If you are left handed - start monitoring your chewing habit and make chewing from the sides your new habit.

If you neglect such small issues today, you will lose out on teeth and a healthy life soonest.

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