

Occlusal Equilibration

(Altering Your “Bite”)

- 1. Reasons for occlusal equilibration:** Often, teeth occlude (come together) in a way that can cause many damaging situations. An unacceptable “bite” is called malocclusion and has been related to muscle pain, abnormal tooth wear, and other maladies. Some of the reasons for malocclusion are fillings or bridges that have been placed little by little over a period of years, orthodontics, developmental defects, oral surgery, trauma, natural occurring malocclusion, bruxism, and clenching.
- 2. What is Occlusal Equilibration?** Occlusal equilibration is the mechanical adjustment of your teeth, dentures, bridges, fillings, or other oral appliances to allow your lower and upper teeth to come together and chew in a harmonious manner.
- 3. Is Occlusal Equilibration Harmful?** When malocclusion is present, teeth often require equilibration because some problem exists: pain, abnormal wear, breaking of restorations (crowns), or other conditions. The problems are usually present because the teeth and/or restorations of the upper jaw do not meet in harmony with the teeth of your lower jaw. The teeth and fillings have not “worn in” properly. Occlusal equilibration “wears” some tooth or restoration areas mechanically and allows the teeth to meet harmoniously. It is not harmful.
- 4. What to Expect After Occlusal Equilibration:** A simple occlusal equilibration usually requires one appointment and makes the teeth and restorations meet harmoniously. However, slight changes in your occlusion (bite) occur over a period of time because of small movements of teeth in the jaw bones, and they may require further slight tooth modifications. More complex equilibrations may require several appointments, and the teeth may shift significantly between appointments. When your signs and symptoms are gone and your bite is stable, your occlusal equilibration will be finished. Placement of any new fillings in your mouth may change the way the teeth contact. The dentist accomplishing this future treatment should be advised of your past occlusion (bite) problem.
- 5. How Your Teeth Feel:** After occlusal equilibration, your occlusion (bite) will feel different to you. This is to be expected. You will gradually accept this location as your new chewing position.

If you have questions or problems, please call us.