

Bull Valley Dentistry untangles infant, child 'tongue tie'

Tongue-tie (ankyloglossia) is a condition present at birth that restricts the tongue's range of motion.

With tongue-tie, an unusually short, thick or tight band of tissue (lingual frenulum) tethers the bottom of the tongue's tip to the floor of the mouth. Tongue tie is usually caused when the lingual frenulum separates before birth, allowing the tongue free range of motion. With tongue-tie, the lingual frenulum remains attached to the bottom of the tongue.

Dr. Dano at Bull Valley Dentistry in McHenry would like to see your infant/child for a visit if:

--- Your baby has signs of tongue-tie that cause problems, such as having trouble breast-feeding. This requires a baby to keep their tongue over the lower gum while sucking. If unable to move the tongue or keep it in the right position, the baby might chew instead of sucking. This can cause significant pain for the mother, and interfere with a baby's ability to get breast milk. Ultimately, poor breast-feeding can lead to inadequate nutrition and failure to thrive.

--- A speech-language pathologist thinks your child's speech is affected by tongue-tie. Tongue-tie can interfere with the ability to make certain sounds — such as "t," "d," "z," "s," "th" and "l." It can be especially challenging to roll an "r."

--- Your older child complains of tongue problems that interfere with eating, speaking or reaching the back teeth. Tongue-tie can interfere with activities such as licking an ice cream cone, licking the lips, kissing or playing a wind instrument.

--- You're bothered by your own symptoms of tongue-tie.

Treatment of tongue-tie may be done for infants, children or adults if tongue-tie causes problems. Dr. Dano does this procedure with a laser under anesthesia in our office daily. This procedure is called a frenectomy or frenotomy.

Bull Valley Dentistry

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