



Cambridge Dental Hub



Love Your Smile

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Frenectomy

What is a Frenectomy?

A Frenectomy is simply the removal of a frenum in the mouth. A frenum is a muscular attachment between two tissues. There are two frena (the plural form of *frenum*) in the mouth that can sometimes obstruct normal function and are candidates for frenectomies.

These frena are called the lingual frenum, which connects the tongue to the floor of the mouth, and the maxillary labial frenum, which connects the inside of your upper lip to your gums just above your upper two front teeth.

To the right, you can see a diagram of the mouth and the major frena that are present.

Maxillary Labial Frenum and Frenectomy

The maxillary labial frenum attaches the upper lip to the gums just above the upper two front teeth. If you move your tongue up between your upper lip and your teeth, you will feel this thin band of muscle.

A Prominent Maxillary Labial Frenum

A prominent maxillary labial frenum can cause a large gap to occur between the upper two front teeth. This can be a concern for parents and adult patients.

However, unless the frenum is causing a lot of pain on the upper lips and gums or associated with gum diseases then immediate treatment is not necessary.

Treatment should be delayed until the upper permanent teeth have come in.

Many times, the replacement of the baby teeth with permanent teeth will naturally close the gap between the two front teeth. If the gap doesn't close, then it can be treated using braces, as is shown in the above photo.

If the teeth begin to drift apart again after braces have moved them together, then a maxillary labial Frenectomy can be considered if it is determined to be the cause of the gap.

Ideally a gap between the front teeth should be closed by a combination of orthodontic treatment and a Frenectomy. However the cost of the Orthodontic treatment may be prohibitive.

If orthodontic treatment is undertaken then a maxillary labial Frenectomy should not be attempted before the gap is closed, because scar tissue can form making it impossible to get rid of the space between the upper two front teeth.

Here is a photo of how a maxillary labial Frenectomy looks on the patient that is pictured on the right:

This maxillary labial Frenectomy was performed after the two front teeth had been brought together using braces.

