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An embouchure aid for saxophone player

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I. Introduction

The embouchure is the use of facial muscles and the shaping of the lips to the mouthpiece of a wind instrument. Most players of saxophone use the 'single-lip' embouchure, i.e. lower lip curled over the incisal edges of the lower teeth to support the single reed, while the upper anterior teeth are on the upper surface of the mouthpiece. In these circumstances, when the reed is made to vibrate, it opens and closes the mouthpiece which in turn sets up a vibrating air column in the brass part of the saxophone.

However, this vibration forces can make an oral problem. The upper anterior teeth can have an abrasion or enamel fracture because of vibrating rigid mouthpiece, and a 'linear pressure' mark, which is sometimes painful, often occurs on the mucous membrane of the lower lip due to cutting effect of mandibular incisor.

This presentation aims to discuss methods that can relieve vibrating forces to oral environment by making an embouchure aid.

II. Case Presentation

1. Sex/age: M/28
2. Chief Complaint (C.C): Restorative tx. of fractured tooth
3. Present Illness (P.I): Class I crown fracture on #21, and irritating lower lip on playing the saxophone.
4. Impression: Class I crown fracture on #21, and cuts and impressions in the lower lip mucosa.
5. Tx Plan: Resin filling and embouchure aid application

III. Conclusion

Far too little attention has been paid to the problems encountered by wind instrumentalist who suffer from tooth abrasion and irritating lip mucosa. Though elastic patches or cushions on saxophone mouthpiece are used to prevent tooth abrasion, it can be destroyed. And there was no product for irritating mucosa so far.

Two thin plastic crown form was fabricated for this reason. And this embouchure aid did not disturb playing and gave comfort to lower lip. But its effect on sound was not evaluated and this should be considered by sophisticated method later.