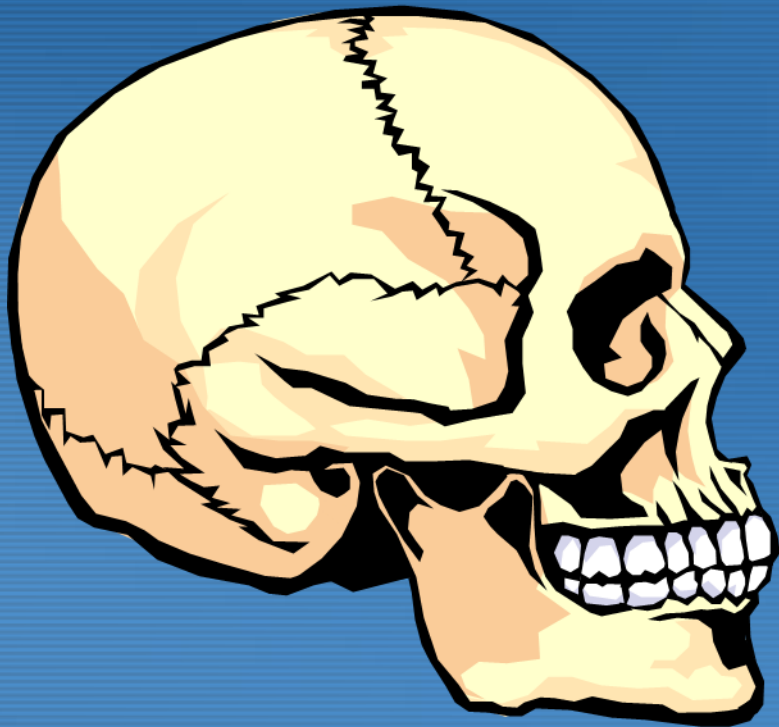


Forensic Odontology



What is Forensic Odontology?

Forensic Odontology is a branch of forensic medicine which, in the interest of justice, deals with the proper examination, handling and presentation of dental evidence in a court of law.



What is Forensic Odontology?

Forensic Odontologists will often work with forensic pathologists and forensic anthropologists.



So...What can an Odontologist discover?

- ID of bite marks on a victim
- Comparison of bite marks with the teeth of a suspect and presentation of this evidence in court as an expert witness
- ID of bite marks on other substances such as wood, leather and foodstuffs
- ID of unknown bodies through dental records
- Age estimations of skeletal remains

The physical characteristics of both the bite mark wound and the suspect's teeth include:

- The distance from cuspid to cuspid
- The shape of the mouth arch
- The evidence of a tooth out of alignment
- Teeth width and thickness, spacing between teeth
- Missing teeth
- The curves of biting edges
- Unique dentistry
- Wear patterns such as chips or grinding

How reliable are bite marks in connecting a suspect with a crime?

Answer: Horrible!!!

**Why? Soft tissue will swell or distort
*and...***

**two people can have similar teeth
construction.**

**However... bite marks can exclude
suspects.**

How helpful are teeth in identifying human remains?

Answer: Excellent!!!

Teeth remain very intact even through violent crimes, fires, accidents and advanced decomposition. DNA is also preserved very well in the pulp of a tooth.

Teeth Diagram & Chart

- **incisors** - the front teeth, used for cutting food. An incisor has 1 root. Adults have 8 incisors (4 in the top jaw and 4 in the bottom jaw).
- **canine (also called cuspid)** - the pointy tooth located between the incisors and the premolars. A canine tooth has 1 root. Adults have 4 canine teeth (2 in the top jaw and 2 in the bottom jaw). Canine means, "of or like a dog."

Teeth Diagram & Chart

- **premolars (also called bicuspids)** - the teeth located between the canine and the molars. A premolar tooth has 1 root. Bicuspids have two points (cusps) at the top. Adults have 8 premolars (4 in the top jaw and 4 in the bottom jaw).
- **molars** - the relatively flat teeth located towards the back of the mouth, used for grinding food. Molars in the top jaw have 3 roots; molars in the lower jaw have 2 roots. Adults have 12 molars (6 in the top jaw and 6 in the bottom jaw).