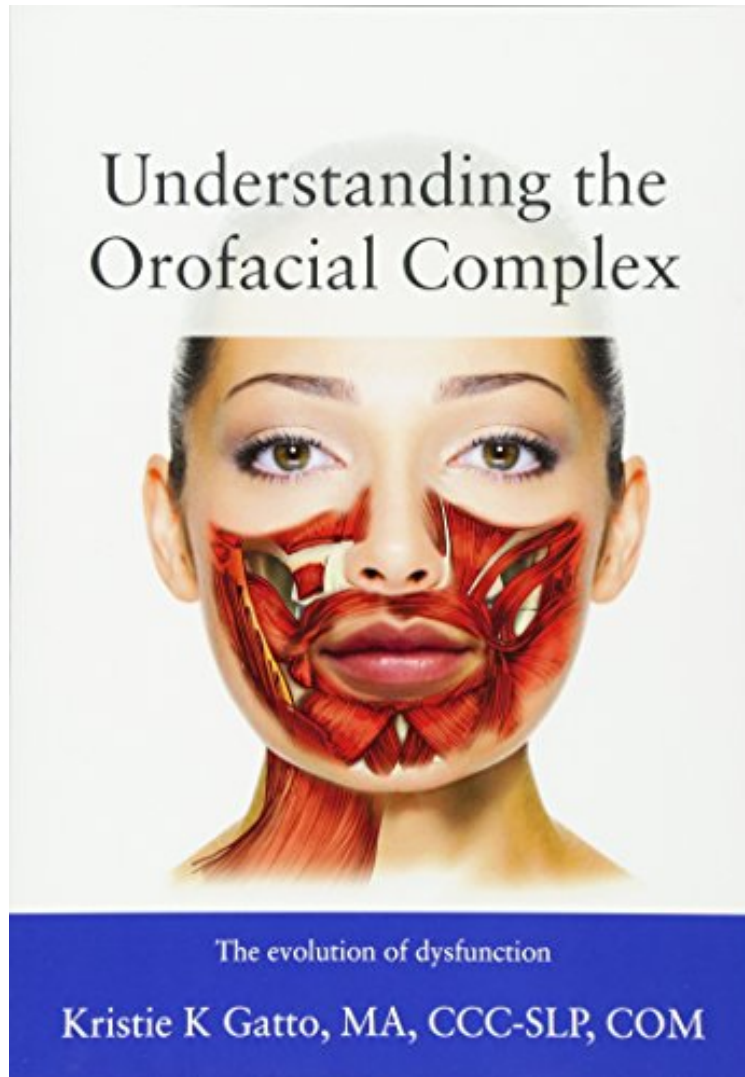


(Download) Understanding the Orofacial Complex: The Evolution of Dysfunction

Understanding the Orofacial Complex: The Evolution of Dysfunction

Kristie Gatto MA CCC-SLP COM
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This book was written to help professionals better understand the systems associated with the oropharyngeal complex. My goal is to enhance the professional's understanding of how this integrative system works and provide a framework to effectively identify and address issues that arise from a compromised system. In my graduate studies in Speech Language Pathology, we learned basic anatomy and physiology as well as human neurology. We applied this knowledge to understanding the swallow process; development of articulation skills and phonological processing, as well as language acquisition. We learned about how it impacted voice production and its effects on speech fluency; however, the correlation and integration of the systems were never fully explained nor emphasized. After years of practicing, opening a private practice, and specializing in pediatric feeding, I began to better understand how these issues were somehow intertwined. It was when I began studying to be an orofacial myologist, that I became focused on the anatomy and physiology of the oral phase of the swallow along with the role of the dentition, the muscles, and the surrounding soft tissue structure. At that point, as a clinician and a parent, I looked at the whole child. I could not seem to separate the muscles of the orofacial complex from the act of eating, nor could I understand the swallowing physiology without the appropriate workings of the musculature. This journey has taught me that the oropharyngeal complex and its associated systems are an integrative, didactic network. The complexity of the network intertwines the respiratory system, head, lip and jaw posturing; the mechanism of the labial, lingual and mandibular muscles; and the dentition, as well as the soft tissue that surrounds it. The proper development and subsequent coordination of this system involves breathing, the physiology of the swallow, craniofacial and dentofacial development as well as speech-sound acquisition and pro