
Including the Stomatognathic System in Rolfing® SI

A Collaborative Experiment in Broadening Our Scope

**Compiled and translated by Certified Advanced Rolfers™
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Editor's Note: The gathering of the selections that follow, as well as their development, organization, and translation from the Portuguese, is the joint effort of Heidi Massa and Pedro Prado.

Introduction

The structural and functional importance of oral reflex functions and their relationship to Rolfing® Structural Integration (SI), both conceptually and practically, has been calling the attention of practitioners in Brazil. Rolf Institute® Faculty member Monica Caspari has done extensive research related to the jaw, tongue, and teeth, and has developed structural and movement protocols to address them. At the same

time, several NAPER participants have been exploring this territory in their clinical practices. NAPER¹ is an organization of Brazilian Rolfers™ operating out of the Brazilian Rolfing Association's Sao Paulo headquarters, the mission of which includes clinical work, public outreach, mentoring, continuing education and research.

Beatriz Pacheco (author of *Including Functional Exercises in the Seventh Hour*), who had studied with speech therapist

Beatriz Padovan and M.D. physiologist Carlos Douglas, experimented with oral exercises in her NAPER Rolfing practice. When she shared the results with other NAPER members, they were also inspired to include the oral reflex functions in their thinking and practice, and began to observe in their clients' processes remarkable changes in structure, function, and quality of life.

Over the years, NAPER has built a set of clinical practice and research protocols, and has organized a data bank, which now includes outcome information on the processes of more than 1,000 clients. The prospect of gathering empirical data on the use of exercises based on the oral reflex functions in the Rolfing context is exciting, indeed!

In this collection, we share Beatriz Pacheco's summary of the oral reflex functions and their anatomy and physiology; case studies and observations by Pacheco and her fellow NAPER practitioners Rosângela Maria Baía, Yahra Silveira Perdomo and Maria Beatriz Whitaker; and Monica Caspari's "Movement Strategies for the Stomatognathic System." We hope it will inspire and encourage the international community of Rolfers to include this dimension in their view of our work.

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Endnotes

1. For background information on NAPER, see Mattoli, P., "Reflections on the São Paulo Ambulatory Project" (*Rolf Lines*, January 2001, pp. 5-7) and Prado, P., "The São Paulo Ambulatory Project" (*Rolf Lines*, January 2001, pp. 8-10.)