



F11 Classification of Human Remains — A New Classification That Describes the Condition of Human Remains in Simple Form

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The goal of this presentation is to provide a simple method of describing the condition of human remains so that this information may be communicated effectively to other persons in the same or different disciplines. This is particularly applicable within the facial area. The interrelationship between the jaws will also be discussed.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by allowing professional forensic operators from different areas of interest to describe the condition of human remains within the identifiable facial area by a simple method with the use of a numerical system that would describe those remains in terms that would not require the use of a particular language. This also allows for the entry of descriptive terms for computer entry by using numbers instead of phraseology that might otherwise be confusing to those who speak a different language. Examples of each classification and the dental relationship between the jaws will be demonstrated.

Acceptance of a standard of classification for human remains is essential to communicating among persons who speak different languages as well as those who speak the same language. The reduction of an object's description to a numerical evaluation simplifies and also allows for ready entry into the language of computers.

Orthodontic classification has long been the standard using Class I, Class II, and Class III to describe the anterior-posterior relationship of the maxilla and mandible. This classification system may also be helpful in describing the dental condition for identification purposes as well. When examining the dentition of an individual, the relative position of the upper and lower jaws will be reflected in the facial features, which may assist in the identification process and should be noted in the examination of human remains. In a Class I, dental relationship the upper first molar is slightly distal to the lower first molar. This is considered to be the normal relationship between the jaws and may result in a regular, spaced or crowded alignment of the teeth. In a Class II, dental relationship the upper first molar is mesial to the lower first molar, usually resulting in a maxillary protrusion or mandibular retrusion—except when the upper central incisors are retrusive and the upper lateral incisors are protruded together with a deep vertical overbite. In a Class III, dental relationship the lower first molar is completely mesial to the upper first molar. This condition is referred to as mandibular prognathism and may result in an anterior crossbite when the lower anterior teeth are in front of the uppers.

Class I, Class II, and Class III was used as the basic classification of human remains with particular reference to the dental and facial condition.

Class I: Refers to a fresh condition of the tissues when the facial structures are in good condition and could be readily observed and possibly used for visual identification. Any incision or removal of the facial tissues that would impact the ability to make an identification is contraindicated.

Class II: Would include facial features that had been appreciably lost due to severe decomposition over time, fire, or extended immersion in water. It would also include remains from severe facial trauma as a result of a free fall, high speed automobile accident, or plane crash. These remains would not be in a viewable condition and would require surgical removal of tissue and debris as well as possible jaw removal procedures for examination of the dentition and possible identification.

Class III: Would be skeletal remains that were no longer covered by soft tissue and the dentition present in its entirety or fragmented.

Classification, Dental, Remains