



Muscles of Facial Expression

DR. DESIDERIO | 08/10/2026

OUTLINE

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| I. Muscle of the Forehead and Scalp | B. Orbicularis oris |
| A. Occipitofrontalis | C. Levator labii superioris |
| II. Muscles of the Orbital and Periorbital Region | D. Zygomaticus minor |
| A. Orbicularis oculi | E. Zygomaticus major |
| B. Corrugator supercilii | F. Buccinator |
| III. Muscles of the Nasal Region | G. Levator Anguli Oris |
| A. Procerus plus transverse part of Nasalis | H. Risorius |
| IV. Muscles of the Lips, mouth and cheeks | I. Depressor anguli oris |
| A. Levator labii Superioris Alaeque Nasi | J. Depressor labii inferioris |
| | K. Mentalis |
| | L. Platysma |
| | V. Clinical Notes |
| | VI. References |

LEGENDS

Must know	Lecturer	Book	Presentation	Old Trans
!				

MUSCLES OF THE HEAD AND SCALP

A. OCCIPITOFRONTALIS

- Type:** Flat digastric muscle with two bellies:
 - Frontal belly**
 - Origin:** Epicranial aponeurosis
 - Insertion:** Skin and Subcutaneous tissue of eyebrows and forehead
 - Actions:**
 - elevates eyebrows
 - contraction of the frontal belly protracts (pulls forward) the scalp
 - transverse wrinkles across the forehead
 - gives the face a surprised look
 - Occipital belly**
 - Origin:** lateral 2/3 of superior nuchal line
 - Insertion:** epicranial aponeurosis
 - Action:**
 - contraction of the occipital belly retracts (pulls back) the scalp
 - the occipital belly with bony attachments works as a synergist with the frontal belly
 - retracts the scalp; increasing effectiveness of frontal belly
- Connection:** Both bellies share a common tendon called the epicranial aponeurosis, which is a layer of the scalp.

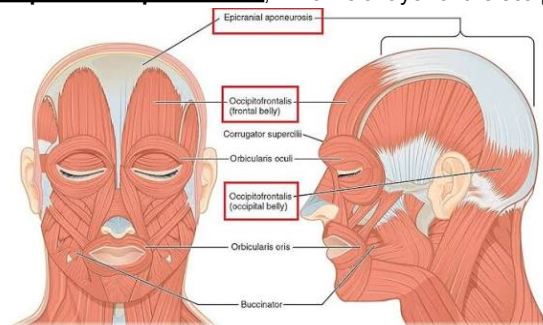


Figure 1. Occipitofrontalis Muscle

MUSCLES OF THE ORBITAL AND PERIORBITAL REGION

A. ORBICULARIS OCULI

- Function:**
 - Closes the eyelids
 - Wrinkles the forehead vertically
 - Narrows the palpebral fissure (the opening between the eyelids)
 - Assists tear flow by bringing eyelids together from lateral to medial
- Fiber Arrangement:**
 - Fibers run in concentric circles around the orbital margin and eyelids
- Action During Contraction:**
 - Narrows the palpebral fissure
 - Closes lids starting laterally, moving medially to help tear drainage
- Three Parts of the Muscle:**
 - Palpebral Part:**
 - "Pilik-mata"
 - concentric circles around the eyelids
 - Origin:** medial palpebral ligament
 - Insertion:** lateral palpebral raphe
 - Action:** Gently closes eyelids (e.g., blinking, sleep) to protect the cornea from drying

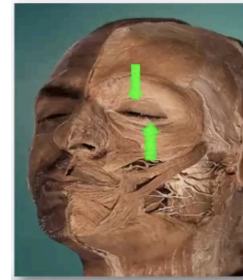


Figure 2. Palpebral part of orbicularis oculi

- Lacrimal Part:**
 - Passes behind the lacrimal sac
 - Draws eyelids medially
 - Aids in tear drainage
- Orbital Part:**
 - concentric circles around orbital margin
 - closes eyelids and wrinkles forehead vertically
 - assists in the flow of lacrimal fluid (tears)
 - Origin:**
 - medial orbital margin
 - medial palpebral ligament
 - lacrimal bone
 - Insertion:**
 - skin around margin, of orbit
 - superior and inferior tarsal plates
 - Action:**
 - Closes eyelids tightly (winking)

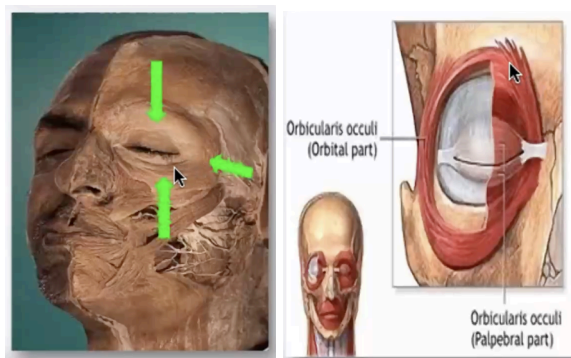


Figure 3. Orbital part of orbicularis oculi

- **Combined Action:**
 - Contraction of all three parts results in the eyes being firmly closed

B. CORRUGATOR SUPERCILII

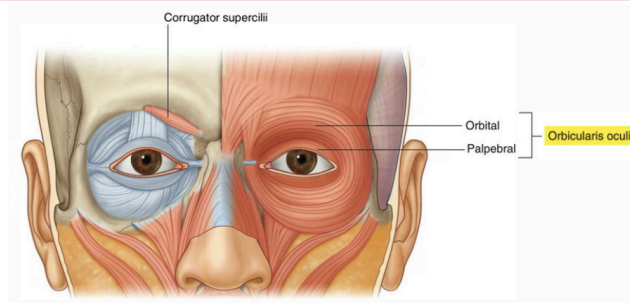


Figure 4. Corrugator supercilii

- **Type and Group:**
 - Small, pyramidal muscle
 - Part of the circumorbital and palpebral group of facial muscles
 - Innervated by the temporal branches of the facial nerve (cranial nerve VII)
- **Location:**
 - Paired muscle located deep to the medial end of each eyebrow
- **Origin and Insertion:**
 - *Origin:* Medial end of the superciliary arch of the frontal bone, just above the root of the nose
 - *Insertion:* Skin of the eyebrow above the middle part of the supraorbital margin
 - Muscle fibers run diagonally, laterally, and slightly upward from origin to insertion
- **Function:**
 - Draws the eyebrows medially and inferiorly creating vertical wrinkles above the nose
 - Demonstrate concern or worry

Muscle	Orbicularis oculi	Corrugator supercilii
Origin	Medial orbital margin; medial palpebral ligament; lacrimal bone	Medial end of superciliary arch
Insertion	Skin around margin of orbit; superior and inferior tarsal plates	Skin superior to middle of supraorbital margin and superciliary arch
Innervation	Temporal and zygomatic branches of the facial nerve (CN VII)	Temporal branch of the facial nerve (CN VII)

Action	Closes eyelids: palpebral part does so gently; orbital part tightly (winking)	Draws eyebrow medially and inferiorly, creating wrinkles above nose
Blood Supply	Maxillary, superficial temporal, facial and ophthalmic arteries	Ophthalmic artery, superficial temporal artery

MUSCLES OF THE NASAL REGION

A. PROCERUS PLUS TRANSVERSE PART OF NASALIS

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Procerus plus transverse part of nasalis	Fascia aponeurosis covering nasal bone and lateral nasal cartilage	Skin of the inferior forehead between the eyebrow	Depresses medial end of eyebrow Wrinkles skin over dorsum of nose <i>Facial expression:</i> Convey disdain or dislike	Angular artery, lateral nasal branches of facial artery.

Nerve Supply: Temporal and zygomatic branches of the facial nerves.

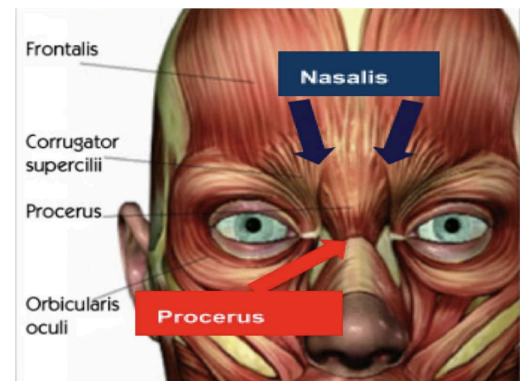


Figure 5. Procerus Muscle

B. ALAR PART OF NASALIS

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Alar part of nasalis	Maxilla	Ala of the nose	Draws ala of nose toward nasal septum Opens nostrils	Superior labial artery, septal and lateral branches of facial artery.

Nerve Supply: Buccal branches of the facial nerve

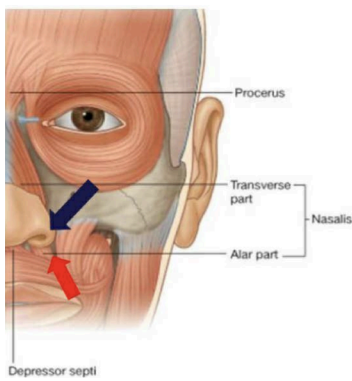


Figure 6. Nasalis

MUSCLES OF THE LIPS, MOUTH, AND CHEEKS

A. ALAR PART OF NASALIS PLUS LEVATOR LABII SUPERIORIS ALAEQUE NASI

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Alar part of nasalis plus levator labii superioris alaeque nasi	Frontal process of maxilla (infero-medial margin of orbit)	Major alar cartilage	Depresses the ala laterally, dilating the anterior nasal aperture. Flaring nostrils during anger or exertion	Superior labial, septal, and lateral nasal, branches of the facial artery; Infraorbital branch of maxillary artery.

Nerve Supply: Buccal branches of facial nerve (CN VII)

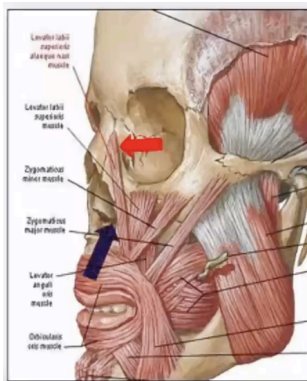


Figure 7. Alar Part of Nasalis Plus Levator Labii Superioris Alaeque Nasi

B. ORBICULARIS ORIS

-  Oris - mouth
- Orbicularis - encircles the mouth
- Encircles the mouth within the lips
- Controls entry and exit through oral fissure
- Important during **speech**

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Orbicularis oris	Medial maxilla and mandible Deep surface of the perioral skin. Angle of the mouth	Mucous membrane of the lips	Closes the mouth ! Compression and protrudes the lips (kissing) ! Resists distention (when blowing)	Superior and inferior labial branches of the facial artery.

Nerve Supply: Buccal branches of the facial nerve (CN VII)

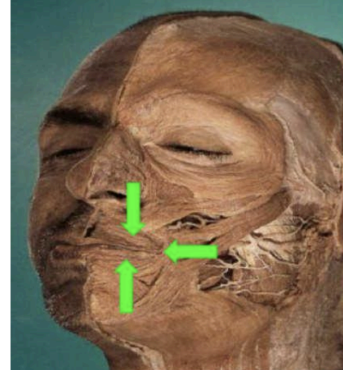


Figure 8. Orbicularis oris

C. LEVATOR LABII SUPERIORIS

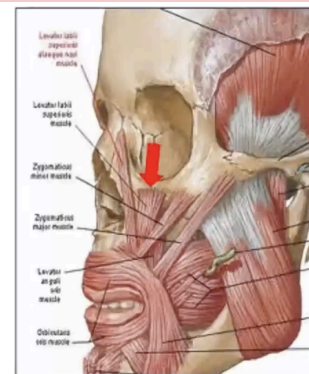


Figure 9. Lateral View of levator labii superioris

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Levator Labii superioris	Infra orbital margin (Maxilla)	Skin of the upper lip	Part dilators of mouth Retracts (elevate) and or evert upper lip Deepen nasolabial sulcus (sadness)	Branches of the facial artery, infraorbital of the maxillary artery

Nerve Supply: Zygomatic & Buccal Branch of Facial Nerve VII

D. ZYGOMATICUS MINOR

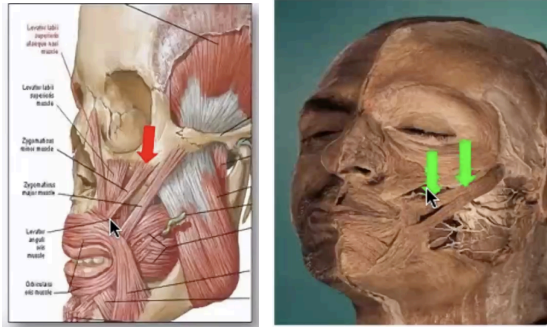


Figure 10. Lateral view of Zygomaticus minor

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood supply
Zygomaticus Minor	Anterior aspect, zygomatic bone	Skin of the upper limb	Part of dilators of mouth retracts (elevate) and or evert upper lip deepen nasolabial sulcus (sadness)	Branches of the facial artery infraorbital of the maxillary artery.

Nerve Supply: zygomatic and buccal branch of facial Nerve VII

E. Zygomaticus major

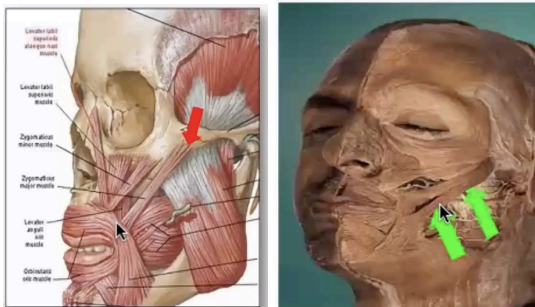


Figure 11. Lateral view of zygomaticus major

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood supply
Zygomaticus Major	Lateral aspect, zygomatic bone	Angle of the mouth	Part of dilators of mouth Elevates labial commissure bilaterally to smile (happiness) Unilaterally to sneer (disdain)	<u>Superior labial artery</u> that branches off the facial artery

F. BUCCINATOR

- Thin, flat rectangular muscle more closely related to the buccal fossa
 - Fibers angle medially with the orbicularis oris
- Buccinator only aids in muscles of mastication

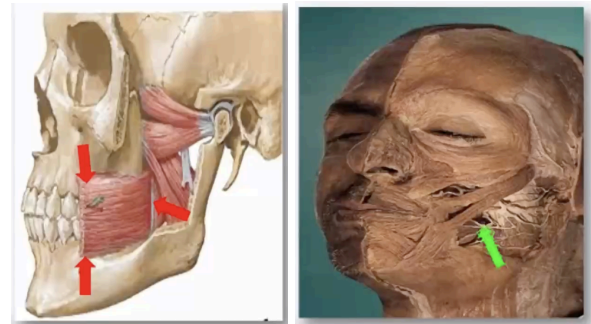


Figure 12. Buccinator Muscle

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Buccinator	Mandible Alveolar process of maxilla and mandible pterygo-mandibular raphe	Angle of mouth Orbicularis oris	Presses cheek against the molar teeth Works with tongue to keep food between occlusal surfaces and out of oral vestibule Resists distention (when blowing and sucking)	Facial and maxillary artery

Nerve Supply: Buccal branches of facial nerve

G. LEVATOR ANGULI ORIS

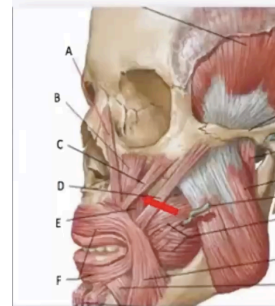


Figure 13. Levator anguli oris

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Levator Anguli Oris	Infra-orbital maxilla (canine fossa)	Angle of mouth	Part of dilators of mouth Widens oral fissure (grinning or grimacing)	Superior labial artery

Nerve Supply: Zygomatic and buccal branches of facial nerve

H. RISORIUS

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Risorius	Parotid fascia buccal skin	Angle of mouth	Part of dilators of mouth Depresses labial commissure bilaterally to frown (sadness)	Superior labial branch of the facial artery.

Buccal Branches of facial Nerve

I. DEPRESSOR ANGULI ORIS

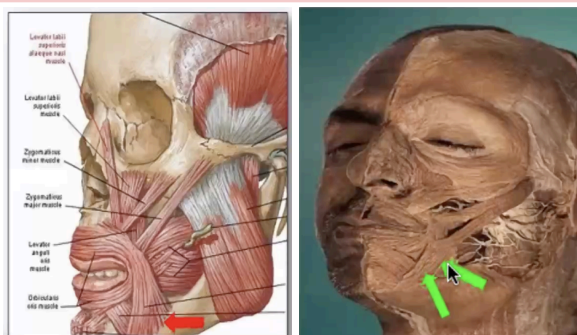


Figure 14. Depressor anguli oris

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood supply
Depressor Anguli Oris	Anterolateral bases of the mandible	Angle of mouth	Part of dilators of mouth Depresses labial commissure Bilaterally - frown (sadness)	inferior labial artery

Nerve Supply: Marginal mandibular branches of facial nerve

J. DEPRESSOR LABII INFERIORIS



Figure 15. Depressor labii inferioris

- Oblique fascia- arrangement of the muscle fibers

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Depressor Labii Inferioris	Platysma Anterolateral body of mandible	Skin of lower lip	Part of dilators of mouth Retracts and/or everts lower lip (pouting, sadness)	inferior labial branch of the facial artery receives also from the mental/mental branch of the maxillary artery.

Nerve Supply: Marginal mandibular branches of facial nerve.

K. MENTALIS

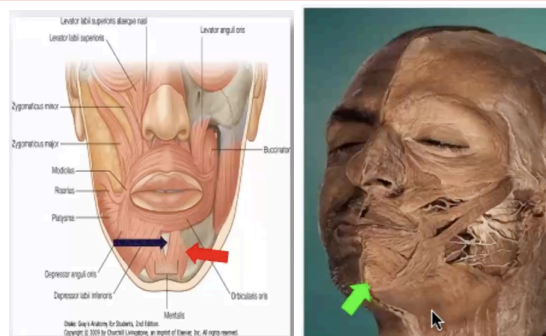


Figure 16. Anterior view of Mentalis

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Mentalis	Body of the mandible (anterior to roots of inferior incisors)	skin of the chin (mental labial sulcus)	elevates and protrudes lower lip elevates skin of chin (showing doubt)	Inferior labial branch of facial artery and mental branch of the maxillary artery supply

L. PLATYSMA

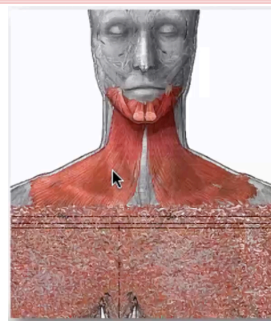


Figure 17. Platysma

- White muscle attached in the clavicle up to the mandible
- Important in surgery, in neck trauma damaged platysma may indicate you must work up the entire structures of the neck.



Figure 18. Muscle Action

Muscle	Origin	Insertion	Main Action (s)	Blood Supply
Platysma	Subcutaneous tissue of infraclavicular and supraclavicular regions	Base of mandible Skin of cheek and lower lip Angle of mouth Orbicularis oris	Depresses mandible (against resistance) Tenses skin of inferior face and neck (conveying tension & stress)	submental and suprascapular arteries

Nerve Supply: Cervical branch of facial nerve

CLINICAL NOTES

A. BELL'S PALSY

- Injury to the facial nerve and its branches (CN VII)
- Manifested as paralysis of facial muscles on the affected side of the face
 - sad look when face is relaxed
 - markedly contorted smile
 - weakened lips affect speech
 - Food accumulation



Figure 18. Anterior view of Bell's palsy

- What will you ask your patient to do to determine if pt has Bell's Palsy?
 - Ask the patient to perform different facial expressions (smiling, frowning etc.)
 - (+) drooping of the affected side, or inability of the affected side to perform the expression.
- affected persons cannot whistle or blow a wind instrument.
 - They frequently dab their eyes and mouth with a handkerchief to wipe the fluid (tears or saliva), which runs from the drooping lid and mouth.

B. THROMBOPHLEBITIS OF FACIAL VEIN

- Danger triangle of the face
 - Triangular area from upper lip to the bridge of the nose.
- Inflammation of facial vein with secondary thrombus formation and pieces of an infected clot
- Result from laceration of the nose by squeezing pimples
- ! Be careful when popping pimples around this area.

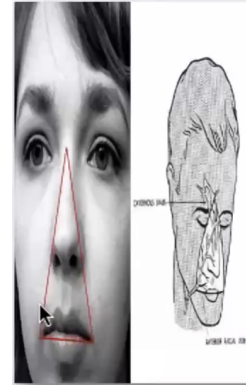
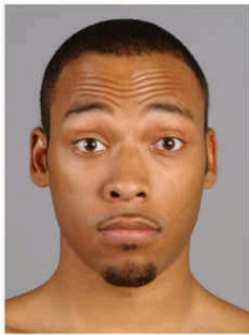


Figure 19. Danger triangle of the face

REFERENCES

1. Doc Desiderio. (2026). Muscles of Facial Expression [lecture powerpoint].
2. Moore (2013) Clinically Oriented Anatomy

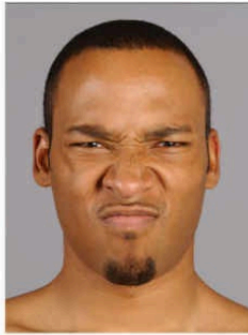
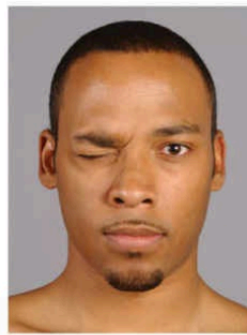
Appendix A. Muscles of Facial Expression in Muscle action



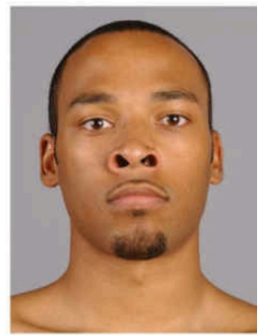
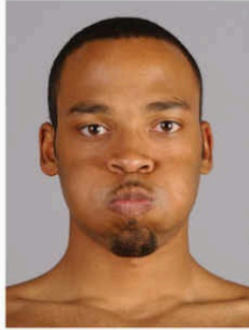
Occipitofrontalis



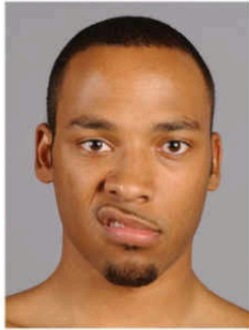
Corrugator supercilii

Procerus + transverse
part of nasalis

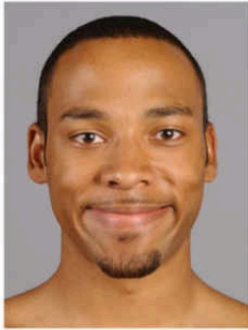
Orbicularis oculi

Lev. labii sup. alaeque nasi +
alar part of nasalis

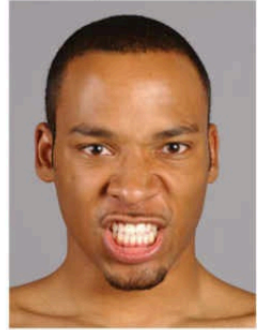
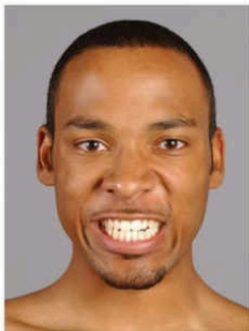
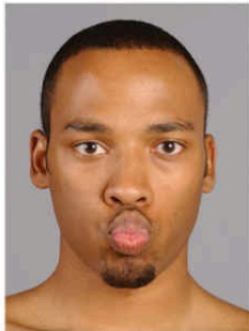
Buccinator + orbicularis oris



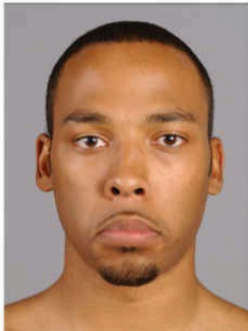
Zygomaticus major + minor



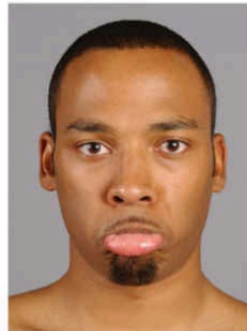
Risorius

Risorius + depressor
labii inferiorisLevator labii superioris +
depressor labiiDilators of mouth:
Risorius plus levator labii superioris
+ depressor labii inferioris

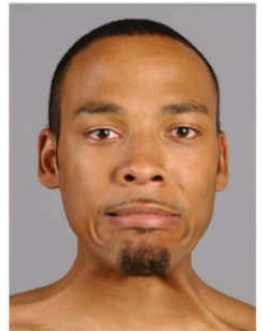
Orbicularis oris



Depressor anguli oris



Mentalis



Platysma

Appendix A. Summary of Muscles of Facial Expression

Muscle ^a	Origin	Insertion	Main Action(s)
Occipitofrontalis			
Front belly ²	Epicranial aponeurosis	Skin and subcutaneous tissue of eyebrows and forehead	Elevates eyebrows and wrinkles skin of forehead; protracts scalp (indicating surprise or curiosity)
Occipital belly ¹	Lateral two thirds of superior nuchal line	Epicranial aponeurosis	Retracts scalp; increasing effectiveness of frontal belly
Orbicularis oculi (orbital sphincter) ^{2,3}	Medial orbital margin; medial palpebral ligament; lacrimal bone	Skin around margin of orbit; superior and inferior tarsal plates	Closes eyelids: palpebral part does so gently; orbital part tightly (winking)
Corrugator supercilii ²	Medial end of superciliary arch	Skin superior to middle of supra-orbital margin and superciliary arch	Draws eyebrow medially and inferiorly, creating vertical wrinkles above nose (demonstrating concern or worry)
Procerus plus transverse part of nasalis ⁴	Fascia aponeurosis covering nasal bone and lateral nasal cartilage	Skin of inferior forehead, between eyebrows	Depresses medial end of eyebrow; wrinkles skin over dorsum of nose (conveying disdain or dislike)
Alar part of nasalis plus levator labii superioris alaeque nasii ⁴	Frontal process of maxilla (inferomedial margin of orbit)	Major alar cartilage	Depresses ala laterally, dilating anterior nasal aperture (i.e., "flaring nostrils," as during anger or exertion)
Orbicularis oris (oral sphincter) ⁴	Medial maxilla and mandible; deep surface of peri-oral skin; angle of mouth (modiolus)	Mucous membrane of lips	Tonus closes oral fissure; phasic contraction compresses and protrudes lips (kissing) or resists distension (when blowing)
Levator labii superioris ⁴	Infra-orbital margin (maxilla)	Skin of upper lip	Part of dilators of mouth; retract (elevate) and/or evert upper lip; deepen nasolabial sulcus (showing sadness)
Zygomaticus minor ⁴	Anterior aspect, zygomatic bone		
Buccinator (cheek muscle) ⁴	Mandible, alveolar process of maxilla and alveolar part of mandible, pterygomandibular raphe	Angle of mouth (modiolus); orbicularis oris	Presses cheek against molar teeth; works with tongue to keep food between occlusal surfaces and out of oral vestibule; resists distension (when blowing)
Zygomaticus major ⁴	Lateral aspect of zygomatic bone	Angle of mouth (modiolus)	Part of dilators of mouth; elevate labial commissure—bilaterally to smile (happiness); unilaterally to sneer (disdain)
Levator anguli oris ⁴	Infra-orbital maxilla (canine fossa)		Part of dilators of mouth; widens oral fissure, as when grinning or grimacing
Risorius ⁴	Parotid fascia and buccal skin (highly variable)		Part of dilators of mouth; depresses labial commissure bilaterally to frown (sadness)
Depressor anguli oris ⁵	Anterolateral base of mandible		
Depressor labii inferioris ⁵	Platysma and anterolateral body of mandible	Skin of lower lip	Part of dilators of mouth; retracts (depresses) and/or everts lower lip (pouting, sadness)
Mentalis ⁵	Body of mandible (anterior to roots of inferior incisors)	Skin of chin (mentolabial sulcus)	Elevates and protrudes lower lip; elevates skin of chin (showing doubt)
Platysma ⁶	Subcutaneous tissue of infra-clavicular and supraclavicular regions	Base of mandible; skin of cheek and lower lip; angle of mouth (modiolus); orbicularis oris	Depresses mandible (against resistance); tenses skin of inferior face and neck (conveying tension and stress)