

TEMPROMANDIBULAR JOINT DYSFUNCTION (TMJD)

What is TMJD?

The tempromandibular joint (or TMJ) located just in front of both ears, each person has two TMJ's that hinge the lower jaw to the rest of the skull. The coordination of these two actions allows you to perform many functions with your mouth and teeth such as chew, yawn, shout, whistle, talk, and sing.

http://www.tmjtreatment.com.au/what_is_tmj.htm

Hypermobility is characterized by early and/or excessive forward gliding of one or both TMJs. This excessive forward gliding results in laxity of the surrounding capsule and ligaments. The over-stretching of these structures allows for disk displacement/derangement to occur in one or both jaw joints. Ultimately, pain, functional loss, and possibly arthritic changes set in.

<http://lisamorrone.com/index.php/free-resources/tmj-home-exercise-program/>

Who gets TMJD?

According to John D. Laughlin 111, president of the Holistic Dental Association up to seventy-eight percent of the general public have some amount of TMJ dysfunction.

This fact sheet is designed to provide you with information on tempromandibular joint dysfunction. It is not intended to replace the need for a consultation with your doctor. All clients are strongly advised to check with their doctor about any specific questions or concerns they may have. Every effort has been taken to ensure that the information in this pamphlet is correct at the time of posting.

Like any joint in the body, the TMJ's are subjected to wear and tear, trauma (micro and macro), disease, degeneration, and growth and developmental abnormalities can cause dysfunction.

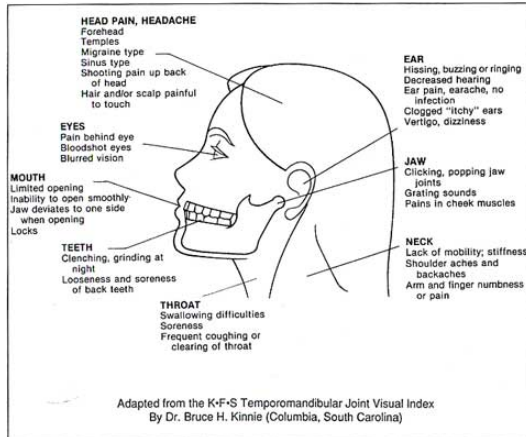
Trauma such as motor vehicle accident, assaults, sporting injuries, falls, difficult dental procedures and any other incident where a sudden blow or shock to the jaw joints occur, can cause a TMD.

http://www.tmjtreatment.com.au/common_causes.htm

What are the signs and symptoms?

When symptoms arise many TMJ problems improve on their own within days or weeks without treatment by following simple conservative self-management techniques. For others however, symptoms worsen over time and develop into long-term, persistent and debilitating pain that often has a major impact on a person's quality of life.

FACT SHEET



People whom suffer from TMD most often report:

Medical –

- Headaches and migraines
- Ear problems (tinnitus, pain, stuffiness)
- Dizziness
- Facial pain and soreness
- Sleep disorders
- Muscle tension
- Postural problems
- Sinus problems
- Poor circulation
- Depression

Dental –

- Sore or sensitive teeth & jaw
- Teeth and fillings that continually crack or break
- Teeth grinding
- Jaw clenching
- Chewing difficulties
- Loose teeth
- Limited mouth opening
- Jaw joint pain and stiffness

- Jaw noises such as clicking and grating
- Jaw locking open or closed

http://www.tmjtreatment.com.au/signs_and_symptoms.htm

How is TMJD treated?

Diagnosis and treatment of a person suffering from TMD can be complicated and transcends the boundaries of many health professions – in particular dentistry, neurology, general medicine, physiotherapy, osteopathy, and psychology.

<http://www.tmjtreatment.com.au/treatment.htm>

Treatment is based on the severity of the disorder. Relaxation or exercise techniques can help. Some people may benefit from physical therapy, muscle relaxants, steroids, massage and ultrasonic treatment. In severe cases dental work or surgery may be necessary.

Massage for TMJD can be very effective to ease muscular tension that may be causing pain, jaw stiffness and/or nerve compression.

Massage will include the muscles of the face, scalp and neck, and may also include the muscles inside the mouth. So not to be daunted by the massage therapist putting gloved fingers inside your mouth.

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Last updated Apr 2013

FACT SHEET

Are there any complications?

As tension builds up, secondary symptoms such as further muscle tension, voice changes, cold and flu like symptoms without infection, tongue pain, and balance problems may occur.

<http://tmi-no-more.com/TMJ-articles/How-To-Avoid-TMJ.php>

How can I avoid getting TMJD?

Every TMJ patient has different original causes for their condition. There may also be several contributing factors causing pain, both physical and emotional.

Key is to address this dysfunction as it occurs.

1. Less is Best
Explore your safe, conservative, reversible and cost-effective options before making any permanent changes to your bite, undergoing surgery, or spending exorbitant sums of money.
2. Posture
If your posture is out of balance or alignment, it can adversely impact your jaw, neck and head. You need to address your posture in sitting, standing and sleeping.
3. Tongue
If your tongue works and rests correctly, it can help you separate your teeth and relax your jaw.

4. Swallowing
You swallow between 500 and 2,000 times a day. If you are swallowing incorrectly you may be contracting muscles that shouldn't have to be on the job and thrusting your tongue every time you swallow.
5. Breathing
Breathing should be through your nose and diaphragm and is normally 12-16 breaths per minute.
6. Teeth Apart
Your teeth should only touch momentarily when you swallow in the back. Otherwise they should never touch.
7. Lips Together
"Our Lips are Sealed" is not only a song, but a healthy way to help your jaw relax and keep your tongue gently suctioned on the roof of your mouth.
8. Calm Your Muscles and Your Mind
Tight and tender muscles are one of the biggest contributors to headaches, neck pain and jaw disorders. Muscles can even cause headaches, ear pain, dizziness, ringing in the ear, and even tooth pain (along with jaw pain!). It is critical you gain a better understanding of what irritates and relaxes your muscles.

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FACT SHEET

9. Avoid Over-Opening

Yawning is only one of the activities that can cause you to over open your jaw. Try keeping your tongue on the roof of your mouth as you yawn to stop you from opening too far.

10. Avoid Extra Pressure on Your Jaws

Overuse and abuse of your joints, including your jaws, can wear them down. Hurtful habits like sleeping on your stomach, resting your chin on your hand, holding the phone to your shoulder, singing, eating, excessive talking are only a few of the ways we unwittingly wear down our joints.

As you learn to replace hurtful habits with healthy ones, you can set the stage for health and wellness (and hopefully, less jaw pain!).

<http://www.tmjhope.org/10-tmj-tips-physical-therapist/>

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