

TMD

Temporomandibular Joint Disorder

Here's your TMD fix it guide.

So you say you have clicking, popping and cracking noises in your jaw joint and think it is nothing more than that... YOU could be suffering from TMD right now and not even know it. The Temporomandibular joint is where the mandible (lower jaw) and temporal bone of the maxillary (upper jaw) come together in a ball-and-hinge joint. The mandible (lower jaw) is the only movable part of the skull. The problem occurs when the mandible (lower jaw) is displaced up and back compacting the blood vessels, nerves, ligaments, muscles and other crucial tissues occupying this space.

The symptoms of TMD (Temporomandibular Joint Disorder) go way beyond mere noises in your jaw joint; other signs are headaches, dizziness, neck & shoulder pain, earaches and ringing in your ears. The symptoms of TMD do not appear to have any relation with the jaw joint and for that reason is quoted: "The Great Imposter". This is a progressive disease and will continue to deteriorate the joint over time making the small everyday movements of the jaw excruciatingly painful.

Now that you possibly could have this disorder, how did you develop it? TMD can be caused by several inconspicuous reasons. A serious accident such as a car accident can cause malfunction of the jaw joint sometimes having a delayed onset of up to a year. Unconscious habits such as clenching and grinding can also cause excess pressure on this delicate joint furthering the condition. Approximately 70-90% of all people have some type of malocclusion, where the upper and lower jaw come together in an unstable way putting abnormal amounts of pressure on the muscles of the face also creating TMD symptoms. With the use of our new panoramic, TMJ, and cephalometric x-ray machines they help aid us in diagnosing and implementing repair on the jaw joint.

Several methods of treatment are employed to correct this illness. The treatment is designed to alleviate pain, develop the jaw in a healthier relationship and maintain this new position. The most common and long lasting treatment consists of two phases: stabilizing and permanent. The stabilizing phase usually consists of a removable appliance placed in the mouth to reposition the jaw and reduce symptoms from which you are suffering. The permanent phase is a little more individually varied in technique but allows us to maintain the jaw in the new pain free position. My staff and I are trained in the care of orthodontics and TMJ as well as general dentistry and are fully competent and motivated to help you and your family with your entire dental needs.

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