

TEMPOROMANDIBULAR DISORDERS & CRANIOFACIAL PAIN



An estimated 75% of the U.S. population experience signs or symptoms of Temporomandibular Disorders (TMD) or Craniofacial Pain (CFP), 10% of which require professional treatment. TMD and CFP are complex disorders, usually involving more than one symptom and often due to multiple causes. Pain and dysfunction may arise suddenly and progress over months to years with intermittent frequency and intensity. Because there is no quick fix or immediate cure for TMD and CFP, the most successful and scientifically supported treatments focus on self-management and control of contributing factors. Most patients achieve good long term relief with conservative therapy. Scientific research demonstrates that over 50% of patients treated with conservative management have few or no ongoing symptoms of TMD.

The Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ)

The TMJ is a "loose-fitting," rotating-sliding joint with a fibrocartilage covered, football shaped ball (condyle), fibrous pad (disc), fibrocartilage lined socket (fossa), ligaments, tendons, blood vessels and nerves. The fibrous disc functions as a moving shock absorber and stabilizer between the condyle and the fossa. As the jaw opens, the condyle rotates and slides forward with the disc.

The Muscles of Mastication

The muscles of mastication (jaw muscles) connect the mandible (lower jaw) to the maxilla (upper jaw), skull and neck. These muscles open, close, protrude, and move the jaw side to side, enabling you to talk, chew and swallow. The supporting muscles of mastication (neck and shoulder muscles) stabilize the skull on the neck during jaw function.

Physical Therapy Treatment

Physical Therapy is well recognized as an effective and conservative treatment for musculoskeletal disorders such as TMD and CFP. Physical therapy aids in identifying and reducing contributing factors to musculoskeletal problems, reduces inflammation, restores function and promotes repair and regeneration of injured tissues.

Symptoms

- Headaches
(Tension or Migraine)
- Pain Behind the Eyes or
Blurring of Vision
- Unexplained Tooth Pain
- Earaches, Congestion or
Ringing in Ears
- Clicking, Popping or Grating
- Limited Opening or
Locking of the Jaw
- Dizziness
- Pain When Chewing
- Facial/Head Pain or Numbness
- Neck or Throat Pain
- Difficulty Closing Teeth
- Jaw Fatigue
- Hearing Loss

Causes

- Poor Posture
- Neck and Upper Back Joint
or Muscular Dysfunction
- Trauma or Whiplash
- Tooth Alignment / Bite
- Clenching or Grinding
- Mouth Breathing
- Habits Such as Nail Biting

Treatment

- Comprehensive Physical
Therapy Evaluation
- Collaboration with Clinicians
Involved in Your Care
- Interventions May Include:
 - Posture Training
 - Myofascial Release
 - Massage
- Joint Manipulation/Mobilization
- Intramuscular Dry Needling
- Neuromuscular Re-education
and Exercises
- Craniosacral Therapy
- Patient Education