

# **COULD YOU BE SUFFERING FROM TMD?**



**Headaches?  
Limited Jaw Opening?  
Facial Pain?  
Neck or Shoulder Pain?**

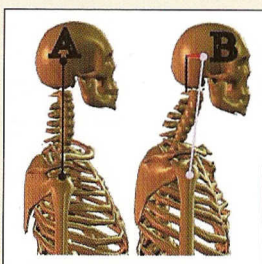
**What you should  
know about  
Temporomandibular  
Disorders.**

## SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF TMD

Pain or dysfunction of the head and neck is a very common condition and one that might be resolved very simply or might be very complex and frustrating to treat, depending upon the circumstances.

The bite can be a factor in many types of pain or functional problems because of the inter-relationship of the overall musculoskeletal system. Since there is a relationship between the teeth, jaw joints, head and neck muscles, and head posture, a problem in any one of these areas may affect others. These can include painful clicking or popping of the jaw joint, various types of head and neck pain, swallowing problems, postural problems, and excessive snoring or sleep apnea, to mention a few.

If it is suspected that you suffer from this type of problem, the neuromuscular dentist



### MUSCULOSKELETAL SIGNS AND SYM

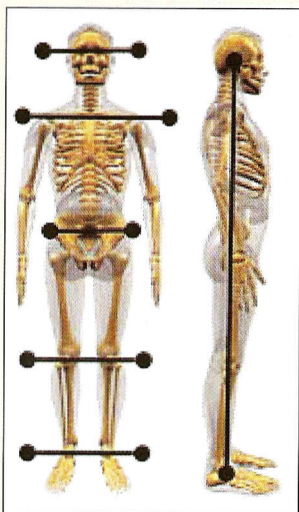
Do you suffer from any of these?

- |                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Headaches                   | • Clenching or grinding       |
| • Jaw joint pain              | • Facial pain                 |
| • Jaw joint noise or clicking | • Sensitive teeth             |
| • Limited mouth opening       | • Chewing difficulties        |
| • Ear congestion              | • Neck pain                   |
| • Dizziness                   | • Postural problems           |
| • Ringing in the ears         | • Tingling of the fingers     |
| • Difficulty swallowing       | • Hot & cold sensitivity      |
| • Loose teeth                 | • Nervousness or irritability |

may ask you if you have any of the symptoms shown below.

In addition, they will be looking for a number of signs in your posture, appearance and condition of your teeth, and existing bite that might aid in diagnosis. An imperfect bite often plays a significant role

in these conditions and the dentist experienced in treating them may resolve the problem. However, diagnosing these problems can be very difficult at times and may require the collective efforts of your dentist and other health care professionals. These may include your physician, an ear, nose and throat specialist, physical therapist, chiropractor, or massage therapist, to name just a few.



## THE DENTIST'S DIAGNOSIS

The neuromuscular dentist will consider all of the information gathered by taking your history and doing a physical examination of your teeth, head and neck. When indicated, they may conduct a series of tests using non-invasive electronic instruments. Data from these tests will indicate to your dentist whether your bite is a major contributing factor to your problem and will help rule in or rule out your bite as the

PTONS

ding

es

gertips

ivity of teeth

somnia

cause of, or major component of, your condition.

If these tests show that your habitual bite is a probable cause of your condition or pain, the neuromuscular dentist then identifies a jaw position while the jaw muscles are in a relaxed state. This jaw position and the corresponding new bite is called neuromuscular occlusion.

## TREATMENT

An orthotic is a custom made appliance fabricated of plastic that can be worn over or fixed to the teeth to maintain the neuromuscularly derived bite position. At this point, nothing is done to permanently alter your teeth or your bite.

You typically wear this plastic appliance for a prescribed period

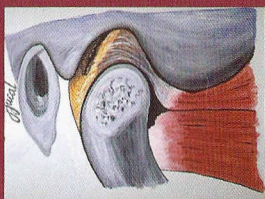


of time to verify that this new jaw position solves or reduces the problem. If it does, it has proven that the imperfect bite was the cause of the problem and you may elect to go on and have your natural teeth treated to permanently maintain that new bite position.

If symptoms are not substantially alleviated, the bite position is most likely not the cause of the problem. Your natural bite has not been altered and other causes may then be further explored. (Although this latter circumstance is possible, it is not likely since the dentist will only proceed with an orthotic if there are strong indications that the bite is a major factor in your problem.)

## WHAT IS "TMJ" OR "TMD"?

"TMJ", although it has become almost a household word, is a non-specific, catch-all term for a variety of



pain/dysfunction conditions of the head and neck. It was originally derived from

"Temporomandibular Joint", your jaw joints – once thought to be the source of most of these ailments.

Today we know that there are many causes of head and neck problems that may or may not be related to the temporomandibular joint. For this reason, although not as widely familiar, most dentists use "TMD" (for temporomandibular disorders) to more accurately describe the condition.

You may normally think of a number of the symptoms of TMD as being medical conditions, not related to dentistry. This booklet will explain what they are, why they may involve your dentist, and how the dentist would diagnose and treat them.