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“TMJ” or TMD– WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Dear (Patient),

What for years has been called “TMJ” (for temporomandibular joint) is more properly called TMD (temporomandibular disorder). TMD is not a specific disease, but a disorder that can involve many and varying signs and symptoms. Some of these signs and symptoms are listed in the enclosed material. You probably know that what we dentists call occlusion is what most people refer to as their “bite” – the way their teeth come together. What many people do not know is how far-reaching the impact of a poor bite can be.

For example, did you know that a poor bite can be the cause of pain almost anywhere in the head and neck area? Headache is a prime example. Yet, headaches in the temple region are very commonly related to the bite and, correcting the bite often does away with the headaches.

To be sure, there are other causes of head or neck pain. Most patients with this type of pain have already seen a physician to rule out other possible causes such as tumors, eye-strain, etc. With the post-graduate training our staff has completed, and state-of-the art equipment that we have acquired, we are able to scientifically evaluate your bite as a possible source of head and neck pain. Just as importantly, we are able to tell when the bite is probably not the cause.

We invite you to look over this list of symptoms and see if any pertain to you – give yourself a “self-test.” While head and neck pain is one of the most common reasons for patients to seek medical help, ironically they do not think of discussing this with their dentist.

If you have any of these symptoms or, if you have some of these “signs,” it would be in your best interest to have your occlusion evaluated. Especially if you are considering cosmetic dentistry, it is important to make sure your bite is healthy prior to proceeding. A bad bite is often the cause of poor aesthetics, and if the bite is not corrected as part of the treatment process, the cosmetic procedure may be doomed to premature failure.

I hope that you have found this information of interest. If you have questions after reading this or examining the Symptoms & Signs checklist, our office would be more than happy to provide you with further information. If you have friends or loved ones that you suspect to suffer from these conditions, you would be doing us, and them, a favor to pass this information along.

Yours for better dentistry,

Joe Jones, DDS

Enclosure: Signs & Symptoms Form, Could You Be Suffering From TMD? pamphlet