

function

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TMJ

Temporomandibular joint dysfunction and management

The temporomandibular joints (TMJ) connect the lower jaw, or mandible, to the temporal bones at the sides of the head. These joints are flexible and allow the jaw to move smoothly up and down and side to side enabling us to talk, chew and yawn. TMJ dysfunction involves facial pain, clicking sounds in the TMJ and restricted movement of the jaw.

Treatment Explanation - TMJ disorders are best treated cautiously, using treatment methods that do not have any permanent effect on the teeth and jaw joint. Commonly TMJ disorders are of a temporary nature and simple treatments are used to help reduce symptoms and restore jaw function. A treatment plan will be developed and specifically customised for your needs. For the best results it is important to follow your treatment plan.

The treatment plan may include some of the following treatments:

- Occlusal appliance therapy – may be used to take pressure off the jaw joints and teeth.
- Modified diet – to minimise chewing and rest the jaw, eat
- Avoid extreme jaw movement – ie. Yawning, chewing etc.
- Physiotherapy – exercises, massage, gentle movement etc.
- Warm or cold packs – by applying cold or warm packs, muscle relaxation can be achieved
- Relaxation and stress management – learn how to relax and lessen stress.
- Medication – in some cases short term medication may be recommended.

Treatment Time - In some cases the treatment may take up to several months to be effective.



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