

Temporomandibular Disorders (TMD)

Are you suffering from headaches, earaches, tenderness of the jaw muscles, or dull, aching facial pain?

Do you experience jaw locking or straying to one side when opening your mouth?

These symptoms may be related to the jaw muscles and jaw joint, called the temporomandibular joint or TMJ.

Signs and Symptoms:

- tender facial muscles
- difficulty on opening
- clicking or popping when opening or closing
- locking of the jaw joint
- pain when chewing, opening wide or yawning
- headaches or earaches

Possible Causes of TMD:

- clenching or grinding your teeth
- facial or jaw injury
- arthritis or other diseases
- stress
- misalignment of the teeth
- loose or missing teeth, or ill-fitting dentures

Treatment of TMD:

- avoid chewing gum and biting nails
- practice relaxation techniques (warm moist heat ex: magic bag)
- your dentist may prescribe anti-inflammatory drugs and/or muscle relaxants
- your dentist will do a detailed exam, including x-rays, and may fabricate a bite plane appliance for you to wear.
- in extreme cases, surgery may be required

Sources:

“Temporomandibular Disorders (TMD)” www.ada.org, 2003

“TMD (temporomandibular disorder)” <http://www.cda-adc.ca>, February 2007.