

Our purpose:

At **best practice chiropractic** our purpose is to help people back to optimal health through providing unbiased advice, offering chiropractic treatment, injury rehabilitation and massage therapy from our team of skilled clinicians.

TMJ DYSFUNCTION



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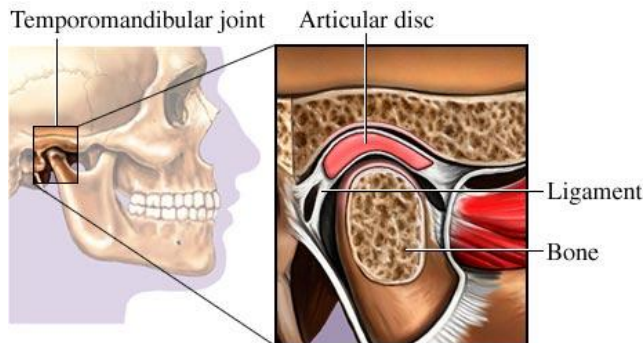
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Jaw problems

The jaw joint is often called the TMJ (Temporo-Mandibular Joint). It is one of the most mobile joints in the body and is not only important for talking and chewing but studies have also found problems with this joint can be responsible for headaches, facial pain, sleep disturbance, balance problems and difficulty with concentration.

Common symptoms are:

- **Acute pain at TMJ**
- **Clicking and grinding sensation**
- **Pain with chewing/yawning**
- **Sleep disturbance**
- **Teeth grinding / Bruxism**
- **Jaw locking / catching**
- **Ear ache**
- **Headaches**



How is TMJ diagnosed?

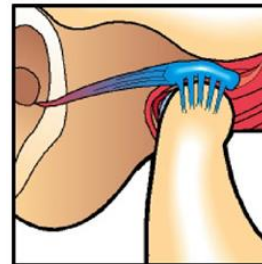
The diagnosis is made by either a Dentist or Chiropractor who are both trained to assess and diagnose the problem. The movement of the TMJ is complex with an ability to both

pivot and glide. The joint is moved by many muscles that have to work in a very accurate pattern for the joint to function correctly.

Injury to the joint can arise from exposure to cold weather /wind, yawning, trauma or recent changes to the bite due to dental work (crowns, fillings, bridges, dentures or braces) but often there is no identifiable reason for the problem developing.

Clicking, catching or a locking sensation when you open and close your mouth is sometimes an indication of a displaced disc within the joint (blue structure seen on diagram below).

Normal disc position



Forward displaced disc



Whatever the problem - it is important to establish an accurate diagnosis first.

Dentist or dental based treatment

Most dentist led treatments consist of either pain killing medication, exercises or bite guards to be worn at night. For some the above provides welcome relief but if the underlying problem persists a second opinion is often called for and that often is in the form of a referral to us from your Dentist or Orthodontist.

Chiropractic treatment

Our aim to restore a more balanced jaw function through muscle and joint release techniques. So for example if there is a deviation of the jaw bone when opening and closing the mouth there is a muscular imbalance which needs correcting, whereas if there is grinding and clicking the cartilage disc is often also involved. We always examine both jaw joints as they have to move symmetrically to function optimally. In many cases we are able to bring the smile back on your face within weeks.

Treatment options

The above are the two preferential types of treatment for TMJ. One is symptom based whereas the other is focussed on treating the functional imbalance itself. Health care experts strongly recommend treating TMJ disorders with the most conservative approaches first. These are treatments that do not cause permanent changes in, or change the structure or position of, the jaws or teeth. Even when TMJ disorders have become persistent, most patients still can avoid invasive types of treatment.