

Jaw conditions respond well to chiropractic

Question: I was told by my physician that I have temporomandibular disease (TMD). My jaw hurts constantly and it is driving me crazy. Nothing I have done to help it, including medications, stops the pain. Can you suggest anything?

Answer: There is hope for your TMD condition. Chiropractic may be your solution. We successfully treat TMD conditions regularly in our office.

The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) acts as a sliding joint with one bone sliding upon the surface of the other. The muscles surrounding the TMJ are called the muscles of mastication (chewing). These muscles are the strongest, most powerful muscles in your body. Chewing, biting and shearing activities controlled by these muscles requires a dramatic amount of nerve and blood supply. Damage to the jaw muscles causes the excitation of the dense nerve supply and increases pain levels higher than anywhere else in your body. Besides normal nerve supply to the jaw, there are sensitive cranial nerves in the face and jaw that can be aggravated with overuse or trauma. Conditions associated with these irritations are Bell's palsy (7th cranial nerve) and trigeminal neuralgia (5th cranial nerve).

The majority of causes of jaw pain or TMD are associated with TMJ misalignment secondary to dental conditions. The bite or your teeth due to improper shifting can wear down the surface of one or both sides of the TMJ. Many times a bite guard and/or dental surface balancing will help. Bruxing (grinding your teeth at night) is a secondary effect of stress or teeth misalignment. Over time this will wear the TMJ down also.

Many chiropractors are trained to evaluate, diagnose and treat TMD conditions. Most corrections are gentle and are as simple as a light balancing correction to the joint itself.

Quote of the week: *“Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anybody else expects of you. Never excuse yourself.” – Henry Ward Beecher*