



## Useful Advice on TMJ Syndrome

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### **What is TMJ syndrome?**

TMJ syndrome is a cycle of pain, muscle spasms and joint imbalance where the jaw meets the skull.

### **What do the initials T.M.J. stand for?**

The initials T.M.J. stand for temporal, mandibular, which are the names of the bones that come together at the joint where the lower jaw meets the skull. This joint connects the temporal bone of the skull with the mandible bone of the jaw.

### **When the five muscles that support the joint and balance of these bones, cartilage and muscles is lost, what are the most common results?**

Headaches

Earaches

Difficulty in opening and closing

A clicking or popping in the joint

A dull aching pain around the ear that spreads into the face

Sore or painful jaw muscles

### **What ways can this cycle of pain occur?**

This cycle of pain, spasms and joint imbalance can be started by clenching or grinding the teeth. A bad bite can be caused by missing teeth or badly aligned teeth, a blow to the joint, arthritis, or emotional stress.

### **How is TMJ syndrome treated?**

Emotional stress can be treated by counselling.

Clenching and grinding will often go away once a person's stress is reduced thus breaking the cycle of T.M.J. syndrome.

You can reduce muscle spasms and pain with moist heat, inflammation reducing drugs, muscle relaxants, muscle massage, and a soft diet.

To restore balance to the joint we may crown teeth, fill spaces, adjust the bite or even move teeth.

A splint, which is a plastic mouthpiece, can reduce clenching and grinding and help restore harmony to the joint.

In extremely severe cases, surgery may be necessary to repair the damaged part of the joint.