



JAW PAIN

Temporomandibular Joint Pain (TMJ)

The temporomandibular Joint is the joint which connects your skull to your jaw. This joint controls the opening and closing of the Jaw and the movement of the Jaw side to side. When this joint is injured or put under stress because of an imbalance elsewhere in the body (e.g. hips, knee, ankle) it can lead to pain. Sometimes this pain is localised to the jaw, sometimes it spreads to the head and across the face, or it can cause neck and shoulder pain.



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What is TMJ?

Temporomandibular joint (TMJ) syndrome is a disorder of the jaw muscles and nerves caused by injury or inflammation to the temporomandibular joint.

There can be a range of causes for the TMJ to become inflamed, this can include:

- Injury to the Jaw or Head
- Dental treatment where the Jaw has had to be widened
- Injuries elsewhere in the body – especially hip, knee, or ankle injuries, as these can cause imbalances to body posture, which over time affects the balance of the Jaw.
- Poor posture – for example desk/ computer work
- Stress, which can cause muscle tension/ grinding of the Jaw (bruxism) or Jaw clenching
- Other medical conditions such as arthritis

Symptoms of TMJ

TMJ pain can be debilitating and often is poorly diagnosed and treated. Pain in this area can affect eating, swallowing, chewing and may involve you having to avoid certain foods for example apples, toffee and gum can all contribute to jaw pain. The main symptoms of TMJ can include:

- Jaw Pain - either at rest or during eating, speaking or yawning
- Jaw clicking or popping - again this can occur when eating, speaking or yawning
- Locking of the Jaw - where you feel you are unable to open or close the mouth, as though the jaw is stuck
- Aching teeth and gum recession - this may be a sign of bruxism (grinding), or simply a result of the inflammation around the joint area
- Pain on waking in the morning - This could be a sign that you grind your teeth in the night, very common in women over 40, or those suffering with stress and anxiety
- Ear ache – there are a great deal of muscles that cross over this area of the jaw, in particular the masseter muscles and the sternocleidomastoid (SCM). Some muscles can develop trigger points that can cause pain radiation in the ear, neck and base of the skull
- Sinus pain
- Headaches, Eye pain, Shoulder pain or Neck pain
- Face pain or swelling - this can be on either side of the face and can feel soft and tender to touch
- Dizziness or vertigo

Top Tips for TMJ Pain

For some TMJ pain can be acute, and intensely painful until the spasm fades, for others it can feel like a constant ache, either way there are some self help remedies you can try:

- Ice pack over the area which is painful
- Heat
- Pain relief medication
- Essential oils such as lavender or chamomile
- Massage (see below)
- Gum shields to minimise teeth grinding, these can be especially helpful at night to avoid night grinding
- Avoid chewing gum

Exercises to help with TMJ

Watch a short video on 3 Exercises to Stop Jaw Popping and Pain

Watch Now →

Further Support - When to seek help

For some people, their TMJ becomes so painful that it starts to interrupt daily living, so that eating and talking becomes painful, and sleep is disrupted due to discomfort.

Fortunately, the Torus Wellbeing Clinic offers a treatment protocol to release the muscles of the neck, face, head and the temporomandibular joint.

For further information and a thorough assessment, contact the Torus wellbeing book an appointment email::

info@toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk

or visit our website:

www.toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk



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