



What is TMJ?

TMJ stands for temporomandibular joint, one of the most used joints in the body. It's formed by the mandible (jaw bone) and the temporal bone of the skull, with a cartilage disc acting as a shock absorber between the bones. A range of muscles assist in moving the TMJ, contributing to activities such as yawning, speaking, eating, and breathing.

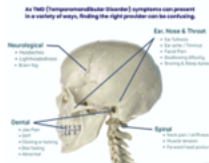
What is TMJ Disorder (TMD)?

TMD is a term covering a number of clinical problems involving the muscles of mastication, the TMJ, and closely related structures. TMD affects an estimated 60–70% of the Australian population, often resulting in discomfort and pain in the jaw, face, and neck, as well as headaches. Common causes include stress-induced teeth clenching or grinding (bruxism), prolonged dental work or intubation, trauma to the jaw or face, and inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis or ankylosing spondylitis.

Signs & Symptoms of TMD

TMD-related pain can be varied, diffuse and debilitating. It can present as:

- ✓ Pain in the mastication muscles or the joint
- ✓ Facial or head pain
- ✓ Limited or restricted jaw movement
- ✓ Clicking, popping, grating, or stiffness in the jaw joint
- ✓ Asymmetrical or deviated jaw movements
- ✓ Nonodontogenic toothache
- ✓ Earache
- ✓ Sinus pain
- ✓ Neck/shoulder stiffness and pain
- ✓ Tinnitus, diminished auditory acuity
- ✓ Dizziness
- ✓ Discomfort in tooth occlusion
- ✓ Difficulty swallowing



Causes of TMD

TMD can be caused by factors such as:

- ✓ Joint trauma
- ✓ Prolonged jaw stretching (during dental work or intubation)
- ✓ Bruxism (clenching and grinding)
- ✓ Orthodontic treatment
- ✓ Arthritic conditions
- ✓ Generalized Hypermobility
- ✓ Prolonged poor posture
- ✓ Whiplash Associated Disorder (WAD)
- ✓ Sleep apnea

When to Refer to Us

Refer your patients to us if they exhibit:

- 1 Any signs and symptoms of TMD, including varied and diffuse pain, limited or deviated jaw movement, or nonodontogenic toothache.
- 2 Changes in jaw function or sustained opening following dental procedures such as tooth extractions, splinting, braces, or wisdom teeth procedures.
- 3 Parafunctional orofacial habits or signs of clenching and bruxism.
- 4 Frequent headaches or unexplained dizziness.
- 5 Persistent tooth, ear, or sinus pain not accounted for by another condition or pathology.
- 6 Changes in bite or joint positioning with associated muscle parafunction.

It's crucial to refer these patients early so we can assist them in developing adaptive strategies, building up motor control and strength, and preparing them for further interventions.



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Specialist Orofacial Physiotherapy at Sunshine Coast Health Services

Our Treatment Approaches

Our treatment plans are tailored to each individual's needs, including:

- ✓ Manual Therapy
- ✓ Intra and Extraoral Myofascial Release
- ✓ Dry Needling
- ✓ Rehabilitation exercises for TMJ and neck range of motion and stability
- ✓ Posture re-education
- ✓ Self-management techniques

We invite you to reach out to us to discuss how we can assist your patients with TMD and orofacial pain.



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Sunshine Coast Health Services

Understanding TMJ:

A Guide for Healthcare Professionals