Inability to open the mouth wide and a clicking or popping sound when the mouth opens or closes. In some cases the jaw can even temporarily lock up.

Other TMJ symptoms can include:
- Headache
- Hearing loss
- Tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- Throat fullness
- Facial swelling
- Other TMJ symptoms can include:
- Shoulder, cheek or jaw pain
- Neck ache
- Facial nerve pain
- Ear pain
- Nose symptoms
- Inability to chew properly
- Dry mouth
- Other TMJ symptoms can include:
- Stomach, intestinal, respiratory and emotional disorders

According to one researcher, “[Up to] 78% of the general public have some amount of TMJ dysfunction. This condition can begin during the birth process... One of the primary causes can be poor nutrition.” Indeed, TMJ symptoms are found in young children and young adults.

Causes of TMJ

If you place your fingers in front of each ear and open your jaw, you’ll feel lots of wiggling. This is where your skull’s temporal bone attaches to your mandible (jaw): the temporomandibular joint (TMJ).

Ligaments, cartilage, discs, muscles, nerves and blood vessels run in, around and through it. This is where your skull’s temporal bone attaches to your mandible (jaw): the temporomandibular joint (TMJ). Lots of ligaments, cartilage, fascia, discs, muscles, nerves and blood vessels run in, around and through it.

When the TMJ joint is misaligned it is called TMJ Syndrome. Common symptoms include the inability to open the mouth wide and a clicking or popping sound when the mouth opens or closes. In some cases the jaw can even temporarily lock up.

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Chiropractic and body alignment techniques can analyze the skull/jaw/spine relationship.

Temporomandibular Joint

• Causes of TMJ

References

20. For more information:
- Biological or holistic dentists use no mercury, perform mercury removal according to exacting standards, perform no root canals and are sensitive to the body reactions to metals, toxins, chemicals and diet. They tend to be open and accepting of alternative approaches. Information on holistic/biological dentistry can be found at oroamedica.com. To locate a holistic or biological dentist in your area, go to www.oramedica.com or www.mercuryfreedentists.com.
- EWTMJ
The Standard Dental/Medical Approach

Standard approaches to TMJ Syndrome include muscle relaxant drugs; painkillers; oral appliances, such as a night guard to control bruxism (grinding of the teeth); massage and a soft diet to ease the pain of chewing. Other treatments are orthodontics, restorative dentistry to build up the bite, bite plates and physical therapy. In severe cases jaw surgery has been performed. Yet this drastic step should be taken only after more conservative approaches have failed.

The Chiropractic Approach

Because structure and TMJ problems are often found together, many TMJ sufferers benefit from chiropractic care.12 Chiropractic, by relieving pressure on the spine and cranial bones, may correct or relieve a TMJ problem.13 Conversely, an unhealthy skull/jaw alignment can put great stress upon the spinal column. There are documented cases of dental problems that, once corrected, have enabled chiropractic patients to better hold their adjustments.16-15

Studies

In one study, thirty chronic TMJ sufferers were randomized into three groups (two had chiropractic and one was a control). The groups receiving chiropractic care had the most significant relief from pain.16

In another study, sixty patients with chronic cervical pain were divided into chiropractic and control groups. There was a dramatic improvement in TMJ pain in the chiropractic group compared to the control group.17

Eleven patients with chronic TMJ revealed a shift from high-intensity to low-intensity pain between the beginning and end of care (63.6% to 18.2%). A significant change of mouth opening range was also observed.18

In Conclusion

Certain chiropractic and body alignment techniques have been developed that analyze skull/jaw/spinal structural relationships. These techniques have benefited patients suffering from the hidden distortions that sometimes arise within us. All TMJ sufferers need a chiropractic checkup. Anyone who has been to the dentist should follow up that visit with a quick stop at their chiropractor.

Improper skull/jaw/spine alignment can affect your entire nervous system.

Other causes of TMJ Syndrome are poor posture, spinal or skull subluxations, accidents and trauma (even from childhood).6-7 For example, a child may fall on his/her sacrum and in time, through the adaptive body mechanisms, the pelvic imbalance can affect the TMJ, head and neck.8

Gerald Smith, DDS, a specialist in this field, says dental work is the cause of many TMJ problems:

Orthodontic treatment affects the cranium in 100% of cases... The structural imbalances cause chronic fatigue, headaches, scalp tenderness, pains behind the eyes, muffled ear sounds, ringing, hissing or other ear distortions, balance problems, nausea, facial tightness and cervical or lower back pain.9

Dr. Daryl Curl, who holds degrees in both dentistry and chiropractic, confirms that orthotics (braces, crowns, etc.) may contribute to or worsen a patient’s head-pain complaint.10

The pain of ill-fitting dental work can be quite intense. There are even reports of individuals forcing dentists to remove their braces at gun point!11

Let us not overlook that the very act of sitting open-mouthed in a dental chair and getting worked on puts great stress on the TMJ.

Spinal and TMJ problems are often found together.

“[Up to] 78% of the general public have some amount of TMJ dysfunction.”