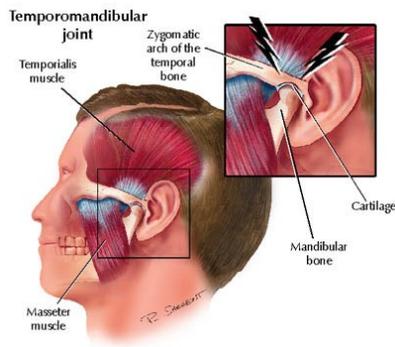


INNER CIRCLE INSIGHTS

TMJ Dysfunction



Arguably, the Temporal Mandibular Joint is the most widely used joint in the entire body. Every time you talk, chew, swallow and in some individuals sleep, you are using your Temporal Mandibular Joint (TMJ). The joint forms when the mandible joins the temporal bone in front of the ear. A small disc separates the bones as your jaw (lever) and the joint (fulcrum) provide enormous force to the joint surface. A smooth surface and minimal friction are crucial in distributing these forces over a wider surface thus minimizing the risk of injury. Providing this optimal functional level necessitates proper muscular function as several muscles contribute to the opening and closing of the jaw and its proper bilateral function. These muscles include the diaphragm, masseter, pterygoid, temporalis, and buccinator muscles, among others. Improper restrictions (spasms) of these muscles causes abnormal osseous alignment which can provide displacement of the cartilage, pressure on

sensory nerves, articular damage from popping and locking, and pain. This pain may be sharp and searing, occurring each time you swallow, yawn, talk or chew or it may be a dull and remain constant. The pain may be localized or it may also radiate causing spasm in adjacent muscles, including the temples, cheeks, teeth, shoulders, anterior neck (scalenes) or frequently, suboccipital. Many people will also have symptoms of frequent ear pain, dizziness, headaches, airway dysfunction, swallowing dysfunction and habitual clenching, grinding or grating of their teeth which they may be unaware is occurring.

Evaluation at Inner Circle Rehabilitation of TMJ Dysfunction begins with a detailed history of the symptoms, time line and self-awareness (clenching). Careful assessment is made of the teeth occlusion and the functioning of the jaw joints and muscles, including scalenes/trapezius, sterno cleidomastoid, paraspinals, chest and intercostals compression which may be contributing or causing the dysfunction by indirectly exerting pressures to osseous structures. Medical history is also examined with questioning regarding blood work (RF, Uric Acid, CBC), imaging studies (MRI), sleep apnea, headaches and dental work.

Once the evaluation is complete and muscular restrictions are believed to be the cause of the pain, the patient is given an explanation of the perceived problems and the treatment and protocol.

Often treatment of TMJ is overlooked or perceived as untreatable altogether; however this is not the case. Most cases of TMJ, if caught early, respond well to treatment and the prognosis is good. If multiple segments (chest/neck/intercostals) are involved, and the condition is long standing, the treatment must focus beyond the joint which will require more time and work but the prognosis is still good. The therapists at Inner Circle uses a combination of education and manual therapy techniques (myofascial release, acupressure, craniosacral) to get the desired results. Education includes an explanation of the pathology globally, behavioral awareness, relaxation techniques, breathing exercises, strengthening and self-help techniques. Manual treatment will consist of release techniques to the temporalis masseter, platysmus, zygoma, diaphragm and scalene muscles. All or one of these techniques may need to be done in order to cause alignments and pressure to normalize. People with more chronic conditions the osseous structures and fascia surrounding them has become so bound down that intraoral techniques are required. These techniques are highly skilled and very effective and include maxilla, sphenoid, vomer and frontal bone release techniques. Light pressure is used and skilled rotation to improve functioning and mobility of these osseous structures. With repetition of release techniques, relaxation improvement, NSAIDs for inflammation, strengthening exercises and postural awareness, the condition will improve which is fundamentally important for health and well-being.

Inner Circle provides effective and comprehensive treatment to a common and often forgotten diagnosis in TMJ.

Professionally yours,

Timothy M. Alloway, MSPT

For an appointment please call (215) 860-3623

*“The Natural Force Within Each of Us
is the Greatest Healer of Disease” – Hippocrates*