

Tempromandibular Disorders



TM (tempromandibular) disorders are a family of problems related to your complex jaw joint. If you've had symptoms like pain or a clicking sound, you'll be glad to know that these problems are more easily diagnosed and treated than they were in the past. Since some types of TM problems can lead to more serious conditions, early detection and treatment can resolve TM disorders completely, and treatment takes time to be effective. But with the help of your TCM practitioner you're more likely to have a healthier and more comfortable jaw.

Trouble with Your Jaw

TM disorders develop for many reasons. You might clench or grind your teeth, tightening your jaw muscles and stressing your TM joint. Or, you may have a damaged jaw joint due to injury or disease. Whatever the cause, the results may include a misaligned bite, pain, clicking or grating noises when you open your mouth, or trouble opening your mouth wide.

Is a TM Disorder a problem for you?

You can have a TM disorder for a long time without realising it. That's because some of the symptoms, such as worn teeth or headaches, may seem unrelated to your jaw joints and muscles. Is a TM disorder causing you problems? Begin to find out by asking yourself these questions.

- Are you aware of grinding or clenching your teeth?
- Do you wake up with sore, stiff muscles around your jaw?
- Do you have frequent headaches or neck aches? Does the pain get worse when you clench your teeth?
- Does stress make your clenching and pain worse?
- Does your jaw click, pop, grate, catch, or lock when you open your mouth?
- Is it difficult or painful when you open your mouth, eat, or yawn?
- Have you ever injured your neck, head, or jaw?
- Have you had problems (such as arthritis) with your other joints?
- Do you have teeth that no longer touch when you bite?
- Do your teeth meet differently from time to time?

- Is it hard to use your front teeth to bite or tear food?
- Are your teeth sensitive, loose, broken, or worn?

The more times you answered "yes", the more likely it is that you have a TM disorder. Understanding TM disorders will also help you understand how they're treated.

Understanding TM Disorders

How your jaw works

Your two TM joints are complex, made of muscles and jawbones. Each part plays a role in keeping your TM joints working smoothly. When muscles are relaxed and balanced and both jaw joints open and close comfortably, you're able to talk, chew, or yawn with no pain.

The muscles that provide power around your jaw joints are groups of muscles that contract and relax so you can open and close your mouth, talk and chew. When they are flexible and not under stress, they work in harmony with other parts of your jaw.

Jaws Form Joints

Your TM joints are where your upper jaw and lower jaw (mandible) meet. Like gears of a car, the joints have moving parts that allow the lower jaw to move. This lets you open and close your mouth for talking, biting, and chewing.

Self Care

There are many treatment options that improve the harmony and function of the jaw. But, in large part, relief hinges on you. The most important role you can play throughout your treatment program (and your lifetime) is resting your jaw, so it can heal and regain stability. Other self-care techniques may also aid in treating your jaw such as:

Resting Your Jaw

The most important kind of self-care - resting your jaw - relaxes muscles and takes the pressure off your joints, which can then heal more easily. The key to resting your jaw is keeping your teeth apart. Practising good posture, eating soft foods, and reducing stress will also relax tense muscles and help give your jaw a break.

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TCM Drug Free Pain Control

Acupuncture works in a preventative capacity as well as dealing with the problem initially. The following regime is always followed, but each type of ailment is unique to the individual and so will be treated according to the individual cause.

- All treatments take into consideration the psychological effect the ailment has on you and your lifestyle
- Acupuncture
- Herbs which are prescribed in pill or raw form depending on the individual palate and case
- Local laser to treat tender spots occurring in the regional anatomy
- Electro-acupuncture therapy
- Cupping/Moxibustion
- Massage
- Exercise
- Dietary advice

What a relief! A drugless alternative to the pain you have been experiencing. And it has been proven for thousands of years. TCM works because it establishes your body's equilibrium by correcting your energy imbalances.

TCM works in a curative and preventative manner. Incidentally, the frequency and duration of your treatment will vary according to your individual condition. Generally speaking, the longer a patient has had a particular condition, the longer it will take to treat.

TCM has a strong sense of commitment and purpose to each patient; this is why we are the only clinic offering one-hour treatments with each appointment and an extremely high success rate.

If we can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to call.