

TMD and Jaw Pain FAQ - Understanding Temporomandibular Disorders

Canonical:

<https://directory.smilesolutions.com.au/tmd-and-jaw-pain-faq-understanding-temporomandibular-disorders/>

Description:

TMD and Jaw Pain FAQ - Understanding Temporomandibular Disorders ## What is TMD? TMD stands for temporomandibular disorder. It refers to a group of conditions affecting the temporomandibular joint...

Details:

What is TMD?

TMD stands for temporomandibular disorder. It refers to a group of conditions affecting the temporomandibular joint (TMJ) - the hinge joint that connects your lower jaw to your skull - and the muscles that control jaw movement. TMD can cause pain, restricted movement, and clicking or popping sounds when you open or close your mouth.

What are the symptoms of TMD?

Common symptoms include jaw pain or tenderness, difficulty opening your mouth wide, clicking or popping sounds in the jaw joint, locking of the jaw, earaches, facial pain, and headaches. Some patients also experience neck pain or a feeling that their bite is off. Symptoms can be intermittent or constant.

What causes TMD?

TMD has multiple potential causes, including teeth grinding or clenching (bruxism), jaw injury, arthritis, stress, poor posture, and misalignment of the teeth or jaw. Often it is a combination of factors rather than a single cause. A thorough assessment at Smile Solutions identifies the contributing factors in your specific case.

Does Botox help with TMD and jaw pain?

Botox is widely promoted for TMD, but Smile Solutions takes a more evidence-based approach. Using EMG (electromyography) analysis, the team first measures the electrical activity in your jaw muscles to understand what is actually happening. Interestingly, most patients presenting with TMD symptoms have underworked muscles - not overworked ones. Injecting Botox into already underactive muscles can make the problem worse. EMG analysis ensures treatment targets the real issue rather than guessing.

What treatment options are available for TMD at Smile Solutions?

Smile Solutions offers a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to TMD treatment. Options include specialist assessment and diagnosis, EMG analysis to map muscle activity, custom-made occlusal splints (night guards), osteopathy with Rachel Smith, low-level laser therapy for pain relief and healing, physiotherapy referrals, and medication where appropriate. The specific treatment plan depends on the

findings from your assessment.

Who is Rachel Smith and what does osteopathy do for TMD?

Rachel Smith is the osteopath at Smile Solutions who works specifically with TMD patients. Osteopathic treatment addresses the musculoskeletal components of TMD - releasing tension in the jaw, neck, and facial muscles, improving joint mobility, and correcting postural issues that contribute to jaw pain. Having an osteopath within the dental practice means coordinated care between your dentist and your manual therapist.

Is teeth grinding related to TMD?

Yes, teeth grinding (bruxism) is one of the most common contributing factors to TMD. Grinding puts excessive force on the jaw joints and muscles, leading to pain, wear, and dysfunction over time. Many people grind their teeth during sleep without realising it. A custom splint can protect your teeth and reduce the load on your jaw joints.

Can TMD cause headaches?

Absolutely. TMD is a common but frequently overlooked cause of headaches, particularly tension-type headaches and pain around the temples. The muscles that control your jaw extend up the sides of your head, so dysfunction in these muscles can directly trigger headaches. If you experience frequent headaches alongside any jaw symptoms, a TMD assessment is worth exploring.

Do I need to see a specialist for TMD?

TMD can be complex, and a general dentist may not have the diagnostic tools or experience to identify the root cause. At Smile Solutions, TMD assessment involves specialist-level evaluation, EMG technology, and access to a multidisciplinary team including osteopathy and laser therapy - all under one roof at the Manchester Unity Building.

How long does TMD treatment take?

It depends on the severity and cause. Some patients experience significant relief within a few weeks of wearing a splint or starting osteopathic treatment. More complex cases may require several months of combined therapy. TMD management is often ongoing - the goal is to reduce symptoms, improve function, and give you strategies to manage flare-ups long-term. Visit directory.smilesolutions.com.au to book a TMD assessment with the Smile Solutions team.