



What is TMJ Dysfunction?

The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) connects the jaw to the skull and enables essential functions such as chewing, speaking, and yawning. When the proper movement of the TMJ is impaired, this is referred to as TMJ dysfunction. TMJ dysfunction can result from various factors including teeth grinding and clenching, jaw injury, arthritis, a misaligned bite, and stress.

What are the symptoms?

- Jaw pain or discomfort
- Facial pain
- Difficulty chewing or talking
- Joint clicking or popping
- Headache

How is it treated?

Conservative treatment may include the application of ice, treatment modalities such as laser and ultrasound, exercises and stretches, the use of oral appliances, lifestyle changes, and relaxation techniques.

What can I do?

- Avoid or minimize any aggravating activities (e.g., avoid chewing gum and eating foods that are difficult to chew).
- Keep a good neck and back posture when sitting.
- Apply ice over the affected TMJ for about 5 to 10 minutes, several times a day. Ice can be applied as often as every hour.
- If any exercises are prescribed, perform them daily within your pain tolerance. Stop the exercises if they worsen your symptoms and inform your practitioner so that your exercise plan can be modified.