

## TMJ DISORDERS: ONE-MINUTE SCREENING

TMJ-related pain and dysfunction often goes undiagnosed because the [signs and symptoms](#) mimic dozens of other disorders. If you suffer from head, neck or facial pain, here are some questions your general dentist or primary care physician can use to quickly assess your potential for a TMJ disorder.

Though not all patients presenting signs or symptoms of a TMJ disorder should necessarily proceed with further diagnosis and treatment, most will benefit from careful work up and, if indicated, proper management. This is especially true if no other specific medical diagnosis can be made and/or you are not getting the results from your current treatment that you and your doctor expected.



### *One-Minute TMJ Screening*

#### *ASK:*

- Does either jaw joint make noise (grating, grinding, clicking or popping)?  Yes  No
- Does the jaw ever catch or lock?  Yes  No
- Is there frequent pain in any of the following areas?
  - Ear
  - Face
  - Head
  - Neck
  - Shoulder
  - Jaw

#### *Examine:*

- Palpate the TMJs while the patient opens and closes his or her mouth.
  - Place your little fingers in the ear canals and apply pressure to the anterior walls of the canals. You will be able to palpate the lateral 1/3 of the condyles.
  - Normal: smooth movement, no noise, no jumping, and no pain.
- Measure mandibular range of motion.
  - Normal opening: 48-52mm intrinsically with no pain. (Equivalent of first three fingers on edge between front teeth)
  - Lateral movements: 10mm or greater. No dyskinesia
- Palpate muscles for tenderness:
  - Temporalis?
  - Masseter?
  - Sternocleidomastoid?
  - Posterior cervicals?

Jeanne K. Bailey, DDS | WV Sleep, TMJ & Craniofacial Pain Treatment Center  
1401 Hospital Drive, Suite #102 | Hurricane, WV 25526  
304.757.7428 (phone) | 304.757.3535 (fax)