



SEE YOUR DENTIST

TMD: What Everyone Should Know

(NAPSA)—As many as three-quarters of all Americans have one or more signs of a temporomandibular (jaw joint) problem—and not addressing the matter can be a real headache.

Pain caused by temporomandibular disorder (TMD) imitates migraines or tension headaches and causes grinding of the teeth, breathing problems and sleep disorders, as well as facial pain, neck, shoulder and back pain, clicking or popping in the jaw and limited jaw movement.

“It’s like I was crippled,” said 47-year-old Jim Bodany, a logistics coordinator for a robotics company, who used to suffer from headache pain caused by TMD.

The jaw joint is one of the body’s most complicated joints. It connects the lower jaw to the temporal bone at the side of the head. Muscles are connected both to the jaw and the temporal bones, and a soft disk between them absorbs shock to the jaw from chewing and other movement.

Bodany, who suffered from migrainelike pain for 20 years, would often miss work. TMD can start early on and progressively get worse as we age. People who think they may have TMD should obtain a thorough assessment from a specially trained neuromuscular dentist before choosing therapy, especially if they have symptoms such as tinnitus (ringing in the ears) and migraine headaches. Standard treatment once TMD is diagnosed includes:

- An electronic analysis of your jaw muscles to find its optimal resting position.
- Then, a jaw-repositioning orthotic—which looks like an athlete’s mouth guard—will be used to temporarily maintain the jaw in this new relaxed position.



Jaw joint disorders can cause headaches and neck pain. Fortunately, they can be treated by specially trained dentists.

Patients often report that pain they have endured for many years dissipates or goes away entirely almost immediately.

- Finally, a patient can be fitted with crowns and veneers to permanently hold the new pain-free jaw position.

It worked for Bodany, as it has for several thousand other patients treated by the growing number of neuromuscular dentists. “I fell asleep the first night after getting the orthotic and the next morning I awoke pain-free,” he said.

According to Bill Dickerson, founder of LVI Global, a post-graduate training facility, only 5 percent of the world’s dentists are trained in neuromuscular dentistry.

For the patient, the end result is freedom from pain and an aesthetically beautiful smile. For more information and to locate a specially trained neuromuscular dentist near you, visit www.leadingdentists.com.