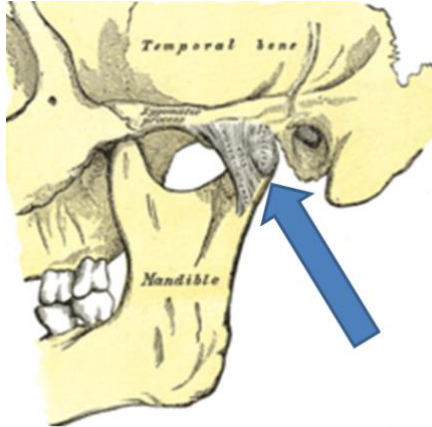


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TMJ

Temporomandibular Joint

Temporomandibular joint disorder (TMJ, TMJD, TMD or TMJ syndrome) is inflammation of the connection of the jaw in front of the ear that causes pain. Pain comes from the tissue around the swollen joint. The pain is most commonly confused with earaches or a sore throat.

Symptoms

- Biting or chewing difficulty or discomfort
- Clicking, popping, or grating sound when opening or closing the mouth
- Dull, aching pain in the face, headache or earache
- Jaw pain or tenderness of the jaw
- Reduced ability to open or close the mouth
- Tinnitus (Ringing in the ears)

Causes

TMJ can be created or worsened by getting hit in the jaw, sleeping on the jaw, repetitive jaw movements, gum chewing, excessive talking and arthritis. Dental disease can also contribute to TMJ including gum disease, cavities, and previous oral surgery like wisdom teeth removal.

Treatments

Conservative treatments should be tried first. Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) 400-600 mg 2-3 times daily, (or Naproxen (Aleve) 1-2 tablets up to twice daily), warm compresses to the jaw, soft diet, no gum, and jaw relaxation can be effective. If the symptoms do not improve then a thorough dental evaluation with addition of a dentist's mouthguard, other medications, and as a last resort even surgery by an oral surgeon can be performed.