

## HEALTH

# TMD a constant companion you'd be better off without

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CONTRIBUTOR

Nearly one-third of people suffer from



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TMD – temporomandibular disorder. It's a poor alignment of the jaw and the muscles around it. Studies suggest TMD causes 92 percent of headaches, and as many as three quarters of us might have the disorder and not know it.

That's because TMD comes masked in such a variety of pains and discomforts. Neck aches, sleep disorders, poor posture and numbness in the shoulders and down the arms, dizziness, a ringing in the ears – even migraines – are just some of the symptoms of TMD.

Because it appears in so many dif-

ferent costumes, TMD is sometimes called “the great pretender.” The bad news is that treating the symptoms doesn't address the real cause.

The good news, though, is that once we identify TMD, the solutions are as unique and individual as the patient.

We use a computer program to help us determine each person's unique “ideal bite,” the alignment that relaxes neck and jaw muscles and makes teeth work efficiently.

A measuring technique called EMG shows exactly how each muscle is firing. It's based on the same technology doctors use to make an EKG.

With this graph, the path of the bite becomes clear. We also make a scan called a CMS, and together these two tests show us how the muscles are working – 3D and in real time.



TMD is disguised as a variety of pains and discomforts, but solutions are available to solve the problems.

The muscles that pull the jaw shut are anchored throughout the neck and skull. The path those muscles take is the key ingredient in both the cause and cure of TMD.

From the data we get in EMG and CMS images, we record a model that shows your ideal bite, and we sculpt a comfortable orthotic – a guide that will

bring the jaw to the right alignment. We fit that guide and fine-tune it.

It begins with saying, “enough.”

In many cases people with TMD have been biting that way all their life – ever since their permanent teeth came in. Discomfort and even pain have become routine for many folks. People tell us sometimes that they forgot it was possible to feel better.

So treatment for TMD is highly successful, but becoming aware of it presents the greatest difficulty for most people.

Using a custom-built orthotic trains the bite and relaxes the muscles. For many people it opens the door to a better quality of life. At our practice we make that as easy as possible because of all the good that begins with bringing it to light.

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