

HEALTH

Pain, dizziness, headaches could be caused by one's bite

By *Stephen Durham*
CONTRIBUTOR

Of all the ways that people feel better when they visit our practice, there is one that gives our team the greatest satisfaction. Patients walk out a different person when they learn that correcting their bite can eliminate their pain.



Stephen Durham

It is estimated that 25 to 30 percent of people suffer from a misalignment of the jaw and the muscles around it called TMD, temporomandibular disorder.

Possibly two or three times that many people have the disorder and don't know it yet. That's because TMD is "the great pretender."

It shows up as neck aches, sleep disorders, poor posture, numbness in the shoulders and down the arms, dizziness, a ringing in the ears, clicking or grating in the jaw joints, pain behind the eyes, and headaches, even migraines.

In fact, some studies suggest that more than 92 percent of persistent headaches are caused by TMD.

When we get to the bottom of that cause, people come to life with less pain, more energy, a sunnier disposition and even a better appearance, because fixing TMD can restore facial height, relax the features and make smiling something that comes more naturally. When people feel better, they look better, and that is what we see when we treat people with

TMD.

The first step is to calm those jaw muscles, using a technique that measures and relaxes them to their normal, resting length. At that point, we can see your own best bite position with relaxed and healthy muscles.

Then that best bite position is captured, using impression materials. From that impression a neuromuscular appliance can be crafted, creating a kind of mouthpiece that fits over your lower teeth and helps your jaw into a healthy position.

Using this device as directed, your jaw learns its way back to a healthy position.

No longer unbalanced or over-closed, the jaw plays its vital role in a good head-neck relationship. Muscles come unstrained. Nerve feedback from the head and neck to the brain is calmed. That calms other body systems too, and the overall effect is less tension and better health.

It's a shame TMD goes undiagnosed so often because the effect is profound. A Nobel Prize winner in brain research said that 90 percent of the brain's output is devoted to relating the body to gravity.

So misalignment, like TMD, can be a big drain on your outlook, your energy and your brain's capacity for thinking, operating the body and healing.

Working with our patients to see the end of these troubles and the beginning of a fuller life is one of the most rewarding experiences at our practice.

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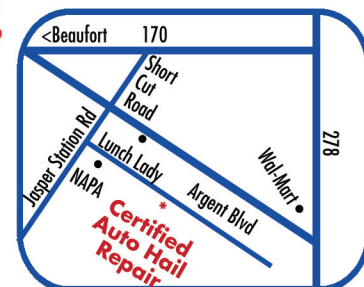
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