

A Holistic Approach to TMJ

Utilizing Advanced Therapeutic Massage Techniques Nutritional Therapy, and Emotional Release Processes

Understanding that TMJ (temporo-mandibular joint) pain and associated problems make it difficult if not impossible to identify the exact nature of the cause of the problem. We have approached TMJ with the attitude that we cannot fix everyone, but can contribute greatly in the wellbeing and recovery of the many who are now suffering.

As has been known for over 3000 years, tight, spasmed muscles have pain associated with them, (tight muscles hurt). We can address this tension and many times relieve it entirely through the use of Therapeutic Massage. This soreness or pain in many cases is not readily acknowledged by the conscious mind, but is registered and controlled by the sub-conscious mind. In other words we have developed habits (both good and bad) to deal with the discomfort.

The muscle tightness that we are talking about would be in or associated with those muscles that control chewing, speech, facial expression and swallowing. These muscles are affected by being over used when grinding the teeth at night. They may be affected by your bite being mis-aligned. The muscles may have been traumatized during an accident, or being slapped or struck on the side of the head. A disease such as arthritis may have set in, which complicates the issue. Some clinicians believe strongly that oral habits such as tongue thrusting, wide yawning, and nail, lip, or cheek biting, can precipitate a situation that puts the jaw in an abnormal position and may weaken or overstress the muscles. This continuous stress can result in tight and spasmed muscles.

More females are prone to TMJ than are men and a greater prevalence of women in their childbearing years suffer from TMJ. This may indicate a serious possibility, of a need for better nutrition during those times when a woman is eating for two.

Women on hormone replacement therapy were 77% more likely to seek help for TMJ as are women who are using oral contraceptives (19%). The downsides of the hormone estrogen is becoming more clear as more studies are being done.

Work habits and posture, things that we do every day, without thinking. Those habits that affect the muscles of the jaw or those of the neck, head or even shoulders may reflect into the jaw muscles. Habits such as cradling a telephone between your ear and shoulder, carrying a heavy shoulder bag, singing, anything that promotes a forward head position, or hunching forward can contribute to tension through-out the body and spasmed muscles.

Stress can manifest itself in so many different ways. Serious illnesses and disease are a result of the stress we allow ourselves to experience. Not knowing how to deal with stress is not an excuse and does nothing to reduce the effects of stress. Stress management can be learned and easily implemented into anyone's life. Simple techniques such as

breathing effectively and efficiently can have a profound effect in reducing stress. For more serious conditions Thought Field Therapy or Emotional Field Therapy can be utilized.

With respect to both of the conditions previously mentioned (spasmed muscles and Stress) a healthy lifestyle which utilizes both exercise and supplementation with essential nutrients will make a tremendous difference. We require a full complement of minerals (macro & micro) in order to utilize vitamins properly. We also need Anti-Oxidants to fight off the free radicals created by the toxins in our environment, and a healthy circulatory system to deliver it to all the cells. Exercise is an easy method of enhancing the circulatory system in the body.

Sounds simple doesn't it? In actuality it is! The first thing you must do is make a decision. Do I want to continue to get what I've always got, by continuing to do what I've always done, or is it time to CHANGE? If you are sick and tired of being sick and tired, then it really is time for that change. Start by taking very small incremental positive steps. Don't try to do it all at once. Remember, you have the rest of your life ahead of you to make the improvements in your life. Just start by doing the obvious. Look in the mirror and be honest with yourself. Let that person in the mirror tell you where you need to start and then take action. The hardest part of training for running a marathon is putting on those running shoes. Once the shoes are on and you take that first step it gets easier and easier to take the next.

May you have much success on your journey to health!

Michael McCright is a Holistic Health Practitioner, educator, coach, and motivational speaker. His website: www.bodymindconnection.com covers a variety of health concerns. Michael is co-producer of an informative and educational DVD: "TMJ Relief". For information and holistic solutions regarding TMJ disorder, go to: www.holisticspecifics.com

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