



The area of the Temporal Mandibular Joint, or TMJ, is the area of the face that contributes to chewing, bite (occlusion) and jaw movement. Temporomandibular Joint Dysfunction, or TMD, is a disorder which has a vast variety of symptoms and causations. Symptoms range from popping, clicking, locking of the jaw, reduced mouth opening, headaches, neck pain, ringing in the ears (tinnitus), or a number of related symptoms. Therefore, TMD compromises jaw flexibility and may cause pain at rest or during common movements such as talking, chewing and yawning. Regarding causation, there is an exhaustive list, with the most common being trauma (i.e. whiplash), microtrauma (i.e. poor occlusion/bite contributing to grinding), stress (psychological or physical), postural problems, nutrition, or hormonal variations.

#### TMD Relief and Treatment:

- Dr. Ross believes in conservative management of TMD. Our treatment philosophy combines 2 phases of treatment. The initial phase incorporates splint therapy combined with intensive physical medicine modalities (i.e. chiropractor or physical/massage therapists). The second phase may involve modification of the patient's occlusion (bite) via orthodontics or restorative dentistry, or any other necessary treatment depending on the patient's needs. If treatment for your TMD with Dr. Ross is not successful, other referrals may be provided.
- Outside of splint therapy and physical medicine, patients should also avoid extreme jaw movements like yawning or singing. Additionally, patients should chew softer foods and stay away from food requiring repetitive chewing or opening movements. In particular, avoid gum, biting into apples and large sub sandwiches, chewing ice, etc.
- Patients should avoid keeping their mouth open for prolonged period of times (i.e. dental appointments)