

Fourth Edition

Manual of Temporomandibular Disorders

Edward F. Wright | Gary D. Klasser



WILEY Blackwell

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Fourth Edition

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We dedicate this book to our spouses and families, who unconditionally and unselfishly gave of themselves so that we could devote our time and energy on this book, and to all the individuals, past and present, who are advancing our scientific knowledge in the study of TMD.

Contents

Preface *xiii*

About the Companion Website *xv*

Introduction *1*

References *3*

Part I Initial Evaluation *5*

References *7*

1 Patient Interview *9*

Summary *25*

References *25*

2 Review of the “Initial Patient Questionnaire” *29*

3 Clinical Examination *35*

3.1 Range of Motion *36*

3.2 TMJ Noise *39*

3.3 TMD Palpations *40*

3.4 Intraoral Examination *57*

3.4.1 Occlusal Changes *57*

3.4.2 Temporomandibular Disorder Pain Caused by a Tooth *58*

3.4.3 Tooth Pain Without Local Pathology *61*

3.5 Additional Evaluations *63*

References *65*

4 Imaging *69*

4.1 Plain Radiographs *70*

4.2 Panoramic Radiograph *70*

4.3 Axially Corrected Sagittal Tomography *71*

4.4 CT *71*

4.5 CBCT *72*

4.6 MRI *72*

4.7 Arthrography *72*

4.8 Ultrasound *72*

4.9 Imaging Strategies *73*

4.10 Imaging Recommendations *73*

References *76*

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 5 | TMD Diagnostic Categories | 79 |
| 5.1 | TMJ Disorders | 80 |
| 5.1.1 | Joint Pain | 80 |
| 5.1.1.1 | Arthralgia | 80 |
| 5.1.1.2 | Arthritis | 80 |
| 5.1.2 | Joint Disorders | 80 |
| 5.1.2.1 | Disc–Condyle Complex Disorders | 80 |
| 5.1.2.2 | Other Hypomobility Disorders | 85 |
| 5.1.2.3 | Hypermobility Disorders | 86 |
| 5.1.3 | Joint Diseases | 87 |
| 5.1.3.1 | Degenerative Joint Disease | 87 |
| 5.1.3.2 | Condylolysis/Idiopathic Condylar Resorption | 87 |
| 5.1.3.3 | Osteochondritis Dissecans | 87 |
| 5.1.3.4 | Osteonecrosis | 87 |
| 5.1.3.5 | Systemic Arthritides | 87 |
| 5.1.3.6 | Neoplasm | 88 |
| 5.1.3.7 | Synovial Chondromatosis | 88 |
| 5.1.4 | Fractures | 88 |
| 5.1.5 | Congenital/Developmental Disorders | 88 |
| 5.1.5.1 | Aplasia | 88 |
| 5.1.5.2 | Hypoplasia | 88 |
| 5.1.5.3 | Hyperplasia | 88 |
| 5.2 | Masticatory Muscle Disorders | 88 |
| 5.2.1 | Muscle Pain Limited to the Orofacial Region | 88 |
| 5.2.1.1 | Myalgia | 88 |
| 5.2.1.2 | Tendonitis | 89 |
| 5.2.1.3 | Myositis | 89 |
| 5.2.1.4 | Spasm | 90 |
| 5.2.2 | Contracture | 90 |
| 5.2.3 | Hypertrophy | 91 |
| 5.2.4 | Neoplasm | 91 |
| 5.2.5 | Movement Disorders | 91 |
| 5.2.5.1 | Orofacial Dyskinesia | 91 |
| 5.2.5.2 | Oromandibular Dystonia | 91 |
| 5.2.6 | Masticatory Muscle Pain Attributed to Systemic/Central Disorders | 91 |
| 5.2.6.1 | Fibromyalgia | 91 |
| 5.3 | Headache Disorders | 91 |
| 5.3.1 | Headache Attributed to TMD | 91 |
| 5.4 | Associated Structures | 91 |
| 5.4.1 | Coronoid Hyperplasia | 91 |
| | References | 92 |
| 6 | Contributing Factors | 95 |
| | References | 99 |

Part II Common Acute TMD Conditions and Therapies 101

| | | |
|----------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 7 | TMD Secondary to Trauma | 103 |
| | References | 106 |

- 8 TMD Secondary to Dental Treatment 107**
 - 8.1 Preventing Aggravation from Dental Treatment 110
 - 8.2 Medial Pterygoid Muscle Pain 112
 - 8.3 Inability to Close into MI 114
 - 8.4 Occlusal Interference Sequelae 116
 - 8.5 OSA Appliances 118
 - References 119
- 9 Lateral Pterygoid Spasm 123**
 - References 127
- 10 Intermittent and Continuous Forms of TMJ Disc Displacement Without Reduction with Limited Opening 129**
 - 10.1 Intermittent Disorder (Disc Displacement with Reduction with Intermittent Locking) 131
 - 10.2 Continuous Disorder (Disc Displacement Without Reduction with Limited Opening, Also Known as Closed Lock) 134
 - References 140
- 11 TMJ Subluxation and Luxation 145**
 - References 148

Part III Occlusal Appliance Therapy 149

References 151

- 12 Stabilization Appliance 153**
 - 12.1 Mandibular Positions and Interocclusal Record 155
 - 12.2 Physical Variables 159
 - 12.2.1 Full or Partial Coverage 159
 - 12.2.2 Maxillary or Mandibular 160
 - 12.2.3 Hard, Intermediate, or Soft Material 162
 - 12.2.4 Thick or Thin 168
 - 12.2.5 Appliance or Clasp Retention 169
 - 12.2.6 Summary of Physical Variables 170
 - 12.3 Appliance Adjustments 171
 - 12.3.1 Internal Adjustments 171
 - 12.3.2 Internal Reline 174
 - 12.3.3 External Adjustments 176
 - 12.3.4 External Reline 182
 - 12.3.5 Appliance Repair 185
 - 12.4 Appliance Examples 188
 - 12.4.1 Pressure-Cured Mandibular Acrylic Stabilization Appliance 188
 - 12.4.2 Maxillary Acrylic Stabilization Appliance 191
 - 12.4.3 Hard Thermomolded Stabilization Appliance 192
 - 12.4.4 Impak Stabilization Appliance 195
 - 12.4.5 Dual Laminate Thermomolded Stabilization Appliance 196
 - 12.4.6 Soft Thermomolded Stabilization Appliance 197
 - 12.5 Appliance Management 200
 - References 205

13 Anterior Positioning Appliance 209

- 13.1 Mandibular Position and Interocclusal Record 211
- 13.2 Design and Adjustments 212
- 13.3 Appliance Management 213
- References 216

Part IV Multidisciplinary Management Approach 219

- References 221

14 Self-Management Therapy 223

- 14.1 Self-Management Instructions 224
- 14.2 Closure Muscle-Stretching Exercise 230
- 14.3 Lateral Pterygoid Muscle-Stretching Exercise 231
- 14.4 Posture Exercises 233
- 14.5 Controlling Awake Behaviors 234
- References 238

15 Physical Medicine 241

- 15.1 Muscle Massage 242
- 15.2 Yoga 242
- 15.3 Trigger-Point Compression 243
- 15.4 Trigger-Point Injection 243
- 15.5 Botulinum Toxin Injections 244
- 15.6 Physical Therapy 244
- 15.7 Acupuncture 248
- 15.8 Chiropractics 249
- References 250

16 Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention 255

- 16.1 Controlling Awake Behaviors 259
- 16.2 Relaxation 261
- 16.3 Hypnotherapy (Hypnosis) 262
- 16.4 Biofeedback-Assisted Relaxation 263
- 16.5 Stress Management 264
- References 265

17 Pharmacological Management 269

- 17.1 Analgesics 270
- 17.2 Anti-inflammatory Medications 271
 - 17.2.1 Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (Ingested Form) 271
 - 17.2.2 Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs 273
- 17.3 Muscle Relaxants 274
- 17.4 Anticonvulsant 275
- 17.5 Tricyclic Antidepressants 276
- 17.6 Topical Medications 278
 - 17.6.1 OTC Topical Medications 278
 - 17.6.2 Prescription Topical Medications 280
- 17.7 Nutritional Supplements 283
- References 285

18 Other Dental Procedures 291

- 18.1 Occlusal Equilibration 294
- 18.2 Orthodontic–Orthognathic Therapy 296
- 18.3 Prosthodontic Therapy 297
- 18.4 TMJ Surgery and Implants 299
- References 303

19 Integrating Multidisciplinary Therapies 309

- 19.1 Management Summaries and Clinical Implications 310
 - 19.1.1 Self-Management Therapy 310
 - 19.1.2 Massage and Trigger-Point Compression 310
 - 19.1.3 Lateral Pterygoid Muscle-Stretching Exercise 310
 - 19.1.4 Closure Muscle-Stretching Exercise 310
 - 19.1.5 Posture Exercises 311
 - 19.1.6 Occlusal Appliances 311
 - 19.1.7 Physical Therapy 311
 - 19.1.8 Yoga 312
 - 19.1.9 Trigger-Point Injections 312
 - 19.1.10 Acupuncture 312
 - 19.1.11 Chiropractics 312
 - 19.1.12 Controlling Awake Parafunctional, Muscle-Tightening, or Fatiguing Behaviors 313
 - 19.1.13 Relaxation 313
 - 19.1.14 Hypnotherapy (Hypnosis) 313
 - 19.1.15 Biofeedback-Assisted Relaxation 314
 - 19.1.16 Stress Management 314
 - 19.1.17 Pharmacological Management 314
 - 19.1.18 Occlusal Therapy 315
 - 19.1.19 TMJ Surgery 315
- 19.2 Integrating Conservative Therapies 316
- 19.3 TMD Refractory to Initial Therapy 320
- 19.4 Long-Term Management 321
- References 322

Part V Case Scenarios 327

- V.1 Case 1: Symptomatic Irreversible Pulpitis Mimicking TMD Symptoms 329
- V.2 Case 2: Tooth Pain: No TMD Pain 331
- V.3 Case 3: Chronic Sinusitis 332
- V.4 Case 4: Chronic Forehead Pain Referred from the Neck 333
- V.5 Case 5: Myalgia Secondary to Sleep Parafunctional Behaviors 335
- V.6 Case 6: Tooth Attrition: No Pain 336
- V.7 Case 7: Myalgia Secondary to Awake Parafunctional Behaviors 337
- V.8 Case 8: Medial Pterygoid Spasm 338
- V.9 Case 9: Personal Stressors and Sleep Disturbances as Contributing Factors 339
- V.10 Case 10: Fibromyalgia as a Contributing Factor 340
- V.11 Case 11: TMJ Disc–Condyle Complex Disorders and When to Provide Therapy: no Pain 341
- V.12 Case 12: TMJ Arthralgia 342
- V.13 Case 13: TMJ Disc Displacement with Reduction with Intermittent Locking 343

| | | |
|------|---|-----|
| V.14 | Case 14: TMJ Disc Displacement Without Reduction with Limited Opening: Unlocked | 345 |
| V.15 | Case 15: TMJ Disc Displacement Without Reduction with Limited Opening: Not Unlocked | 346 |
| V.16 | Case 16: Osteitis Causing Inability to Open Wide | 348 |
| V.17 | Case 17: Lateral Pterygoid Spasm | 350 |
| V.18 | Case 18: Acute Exacerbation of TMD | 352 |
| V.19 | Case 19: Multiple Forms of Head and Neck Pain After Crown Insertion | 354 |
| V.20 | Case 20: Appliance That Positioned Condyles into Their “Proper Position” | 355 |
| | References | 357 |

Part VI Fundamentals of Clinical Studies 359

| | | |
|--------|---|-----|
| VI.1 | Prominent Clinical Study Designs | 359 |
| VI.1.1 | Case Report | 359 |
| VI.1.2 | Case Series Study | 360 |
| VI.1.3 | Cross-Sectional Study | 361 |
| VI.1.4 | Case-Control Study | 362 |
| VI.1.5 | Cohort Study | 362 |
| VI.1.6 | Nonrandomized Clinical Trial | 363 |
| VI.1.7 | Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) | 365 |
| VI.2 | Other Types of Publications | 367 |
| VI.2.1 | Literature Reviews | 367 |
| VI.2.2 | Systematic Reviews | 367 |
| VI.2.3 | Meta-Analyses | 367 |
| VI.2.4 | Clinical Practice Guidelines | 368 |
| VI.3 | Considerations in Assessing Clinical Trials | 368 |
| VI.4 | Conclusions | 368 |
| | References | 369 |

Glossary 373

Index 377

Preface

We are both temporomandibular disorder (TMD) educators and clinicians with additional training in TMD. As educators we strive to provide our students with an education on various subjects that will prepare them to deliver appropriate care to their patients upon graduation. As clinicians we aim to provide our patients with quality care based upon sound scientific principles. When we were educating our students about TMD we discovered a common concern among our predoctoral students and postgraduate residents. Both groups lamented they were lacking a concise, clinically relevant, evidence-based TMD book. Specifically, they wished for a book (i) written on the level for the average dentist or dental student/resident, (ii) focused on evidence-based diagnosis and multidisciplinary management for the majority of TMD patients, (iii) that included guidelines on how to rule out disorders that mimic TMD and identify medical contributing factors for which patients may need to be referred, (iv) that detailed how to identify patients with complex TMD who are beyond the scope of most dentists, and (v) that focused on means and ways they could provide their patients with evidence-based management strategies and interventions.

Therefore, we decided to produce a book to satisfy their needs as well as to the needs of general dental practitioners who wish to learn more about TMD. As such, we decided to assimilate our academic and clinical evidence-based TMD knowledge and experiences to produce such a book. This book attempts to simplify the complexities of

TMD for ease of clinical understanding and application, in addition to integrating the current scientific literature, clinical trials, and clinical experiences into an effective strategy. To the degree possible, it provides a systematic guide on how to most effectively diagnose and manage the various types of TMD patients. The book directs how the information obtained from the patient interview and clinical exam can be used to select the most cost-effective, evidence-based management approaches that have the greatest potential to provide long-term symptom relief.

Those who choose to manage TMD patients must not only consider the musculoskeletal factors but also the psychosocial and neurophysiology issues related to the management of TMD. Since most readers of this text are not trained to be TMD “specialists,” the most easily understandable mechanisms that correlate to the recommended management approaches have been chosen. Occasionally, when simplified mechanisms will not sufficiently explain the phenomenon, other considerations such as psychosocial and CNS involvement are discussed. Similarly, since this is not a comprehensive reference book on TMD, it periodically warns that certain characteristics are suggestive of an uncommon disorder beyond the book’s scope and recommends the reader consider referring the patient to a more knowledgeable and experienced practitioner.

To enhance the educational experience for the reader, we have provided questions that

we frequently receive at the beginning of the applicable chapters, and important concepts are highlighted throughout the book. Important terms are in bold, with many listed in the glossary.

We are proud to state this is the fourth edition of this book. The material contained herein has certainly been expanded and enhanced from the various previous editions as we have embraced the explosion

of scientific knowledge in this particular field of dentistry. We sincerely hope this easily-read textbook will be used to facilitate your TMD evaluations and therapies and ultimately assist you in providing your patients with the best scientifically-based care possible.

Edward F. Wright
Gary D. Klasser

About the Companion Website

Don't forget to visit the companion website for this book:

www.wiley.com/go/wright/manual



There you will find valuable material designed to enhance your learning, including:

- Patient Handouts
- Examples
- Additional TMD Information

Scan this QR code to visit the companion website



Introduction

The cardinal signs and symptoms for temporomandibular disorder (TMD) are pain in the masseter muscle, temporomandibular joint (TMJ), and/or temporalis muscle regions; mouth-opening limitation; and TMJ sounds. TMD pain is by far the most common reason patients seek care [1, 2].

Focal Point

The cardinal signs and symptoms for TMD are pain in the masseter muscle, TMJ, and/or temporalis muscle regions; mouth-opening limitation; and TMJ sounds.

TMD is the second most common musculoskeletal pain, with low back pain being the first. It is most often reported in individuals between the ages of 20 and 40. Approximately 33% of the population has at least one TMD symptom, and 3.6–7% of the population has TMD with sufficient severity to cause patients to seek care [2–5].

Focal Point

TMD is an extremely common disorder that is most often reported in individuals between the ages of 20 and 40. Approximately 33% of the population has at least one TMD symptom, and 3.6–7% has TMD with sufficient severity that care is desired.

TMD symptoms generally fluctuate over time and correlate significantly with masticatory muscle tension, tooth clenching, grinding,

and other **oral parafunctional behaviors**. TMD symptoms are also significantly associated with an increase in psychosocial factors, for example, worry, stress, irritation, frustration, and depression [6–8]. Furthermore, TMD patients with poor psychosocial adaptation have significantly greater symptom improvement when the dentist's TMD therapy is combined with cognitive-behavioral intervention [2, 9].

Quick Consult

Observing TMD Symptom Correlations

TMD symptoms generally fluctuate over time and correlate significantly with masticatory muscle tension, tooth clenching, grinding, and other oral parafunctional behaviors. TMD symptoms are also significantly associated with an increase in psychosocial factors, for example, worry, stress, irritation, frustration, and depression.

TMD can cause other symptoms that are beyond the masticatory musculoskeletal system, for example, tooth pain, nonotologic otalgia (ear pain that is not caused by the ear), dizziness, tinnitus, and neck pain. TMD can contribute to migraine and tension headaches, muscle pain in the region, and many other pain complaints [10].

Women request therapy more often than do men, providing a female–male patient ratio between 3:1 and 9:1 [2]. Additionally, TMD symptoms are less likely to resolve for

women than for men [6, 7]. Many hypotheses attempt to account for the gender difference, but the underlying reason remains unclear [11].

Quick Consult

Comparing the Response of Men and Women

TMD symptoms are less likely to resolve for women than for men.

Knowledge about TMD has grown throughout the ages. In general, management philosophies have evolved from a mechanistic dental approach to a biopsychosocial medical model with the integration of neuroscience literature. This is comparable to the management philosophies of other joint and muscle conditions in the body [3, 12, 13].

Beneficial occlusal appliance therapy and TMJ disc-recapturing surgery were reported as early as the 1800s [12, 14]. The understanding of the importance to harmonize the occlusion for the health of the masticatory muscles and TMJs developed as the skills to reconstruct natural teeth advanced. As enthusiasm grew for obtaining optimum health, comfort, and function, the popularity of equilibrating the natural dentition also developed [12, 15].

In the 1930s, Dr. James Costen, an otolaryngologist, brought TMD into the awareness of physicians and dentists, and readers may still find TMD occasionally referred to as **Costen's syndrome**. Dr. Costen reported that TMD pain and secondary otologic symptoms could be reduced with alterations of the occlusion [16].

Since TMD is a multifactorial disorder (having many etiologic factors), many therapies have a positive impact on any one patient's symptoms. Throughout much of the 1900s, many beneficial therapies were independently identified. Physicians, physical therapists, chiropractors, massage therapists, and others treating the muscles and/or cervical region reported positive responses in treating TMD symptoms. Psychologists

working with relaxation, stress management, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and other psychological aspects reported beneficial effects with their therapies. Orthodontists, prosthodontists, and general dentists working with the occlusion also observed the positive impact that occlusal changes provided for TMD symptoms.

Focal Point

Since TMD is a multifactorial disorder (having many etiologic factors), many therapies have a positive impact on any one patient's symptoms.

Surgeons reported positive benefits from many different TMJ surgical approaches. Many forms of occlusal appliance were tried and advocated, from which studies reveal there is similar efficacy for different appliance forms. Medications as well as self-management strategies used for other muscles and joints in the body were also shown to improve TMD symptoms. During this observational period, TMD therapies were primarily based on testimonials and clinical opinions, according to a practitioner's favorite causation hypothesis rather than scientific studies [12].

Different philosophies appeared, with enthusiastic nonsurgeons "recapturing" discs through occlusal appliances, whereas surgeons repositioned the discs or replaced discs with autoplasmic materials. The eventual breakdown of the autoplasmic materials led to heartbreaking sequelae that caused many to step back from their narrowly focused treatment regimens and recognize the multifactorial nature of TMD and the importance of conservative noninvasive evidence-based therapies [12].

Over the last 50 years, much was learned about basic pain mechanisms and the shared neuron pool of the trigeminal spinal nucleus, other cranial nerves, and cervical nerves. This provided a better understanding of the influence that regional and widespread pain may have on TMD, the similarities between

chronic TMD pain and other chronic pain disorders, and the need for chronic pain management from a psychosocial and behavioral standpoint [8, 17].

Today, a large number of potentially reversible conservative therapies are available for our TMD patients. By using the information obtained from the recommended patient interview and clinical exam, practitioners can select cost-effective, evidence-based therapies that have the greatest potential to provide long-term symptom relief. The management selected often reduces a patient's **contributing factors** and facilitates the patient's natural healing capacity. This management is consistent with therapies of other orthopedic and rheumatologic disorders [2, 3, 10, 13].

Quick Consult

Selecting TMD Therapies

Today, a large number of potentially reversible conservative therapies are available for our TMD patients.

We do not fully understand TMD and the mechanisms causing or sustaining it. Practitioners should bear in mind that not all TMD therapies are equally effective, and no one therapy has been shown to be best for all TMD patients. Most TMD patients can be

Focal Point

By using the information obtained from the patient interview and clinical exam, practitioners can select cost-effective, evidence-based therapies that have the greatest potential to provide long-term symptom relief for patients. The therapies selected often reduce a patient's contributing factors and facilitate the patient's natural healing capacity.

managed successfully with reversible, conservative, noninvasive therapies by general practitioners, without using expensive, high-tech therapies [4, 18–20].

Most TMD patients who receive therapy obtain significant symptom relief, whereas patients who do not receive therapy have minimal symptom change [21].

TMD therapy is generally recommended for patients who have significant temporal headaches, preauricular pain, masseter muscle pain, TMJ catching or locking, loud TMJ noises, restricted opening, difficulty eating due to TMD, or nonotologic otalgia due to TMD.

To help your hygienists better identify patients in your practice who need your help, a recommended “Referral Criteria for Hygienists” is available on the book's website.

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Part I

Initial Evaluation

Temporomandibular disorder (TMD) generally involves many structures with varying degrees of pain intensity and dysfunction. During the initial evaluation, the involved structures need to be identified and the degree to which each contributes to the patient's symptoms need to be categorized. Additionally, the contributing factors and symptom patterns help to identify which therapies will be the most beneficial for each patient [1].

Hence, the goals of the initial examination are to identify: a patient's primary diagnosis; secondary, tertiary, and so on, diagnoses; contributing factors; and symptom patterns.

Focal Point

The goals of the initial examination are to identify: a patient's primary diagnosis; secondary, tertiary, and so on, diagnoses; contributing factors; and symptom patterns.

The **primary diagnosis** is the diagnosis for the disorder most responsible for a patient's chief complaint. This diagnosis can be of TMD origin (e.g. myalgia, TMJ arthralgia, or temporomandibular joint [TMJ] disc displacement without reduction with limited opening) or from a different source (e.g. pulpitis, sinusitis, or cervicogenic headache) [2].

Focal Point

The primary diagnosis is the diagnosis for the disorder most responsible for a patient's chief complaint.

Secondary diagnosis, tertiary diagnosis, and so on, are other TMD diagnoses that generally contribute to the TMD symptoms. Typically, the primary diagnosis will be of TMD origin (e.g. myalgia), and the secondary and tertiary diagnoses will be other TMD diagnoses (e.g. TMJ arthralgia and TMJ disc displacement with reduction) that contribute to a patient's chief complaint. When a non-TMD (e.g. fibromyalgia) contributes to a TMD primary diagnosis, the non-TMD disorder is designated as a contributing factor to the TMD diagnosis and not as secondary or tertiary diagnosis [2].

Focal Point

Secondary, tertiary, and so on, diagnoses are additional TMD diagnoses that contribute to the TMD symptoms.

During the initial exam, we also attempt to identify the **perpetuating contributing factors**. These are elements that perpetuate the disorder (not allowing it to resolve), for

example, sleep parafunctional behaviors, gum chewing, awake clenching, stress, or neck pain [1–3]. Additionally, we attempt to identify the **symptom patterns** that include the period of the day in which the symptoms occur or are most intense (e.g. worse upon awaking) and the location pattern (e.g. begins in the neck and then moves to the jaw).

Focal Point

Perpetuating contributing factors are elements that are not allowing the disorder to resolve, for example, sleep parafunctional behaviors, gum chewing, awake clenching, stress, or poor posture.

Symptom patterns include the period of the day in which the symptoms occur or are most intense (e.g. worse upon awaking) and the location pattern (e.g. begins in the neck and then moves to the jaw).

The following non-TMD examples may help you better understand how these terms are used. A patient complains to her physician about wrist pain. Through palpation of her wrist area, her physician determines the primary cause for her pain is the tenderness within the wrist joint (its diagnosis would be the primary diagnosis). Her physician also finds the muscles around the wrist are painful but less tender than the wrist joint (the muscle diagnosis would be the secondary diagnosis). The physician also knows the patient has a systemic arthritic condition, which he suspects makes her more susceptible to developing the wrist pain (a contributing factor).

By asking questions, the physician finds that this pain only occurs upon awakening and lasts half an hour; this suggests that wrist activity occurring during sleep is the major contributing factor. Her physician may decide the best initial therapy is to prescribe her a wrist splint to wear during sleep to ensure the wrist stays in a neutral position.

In a second example, the patient has the identical diagnosis and a systemic arthritic

condition but has a different symptom pattern. In this example, the wrist pain consistently begins approximately half an hour after she starts using the computer and continues as long as she uses the computer, suggesting that computer use is the major contributing factor for her wrist pain.

To treat the wrist pain, her physician decides the best initial approach is to (i) refer her to a therapist to teach her about computer keyboard and mouse ergonomics, and (ii) prescribe her a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) short term, to provide her with temporary pain relief until her wrist responds to the computer keyboard and mouse ergonomic instructions. In both situations, the physician decides to not escalate therapy for the systemic arthritic condition because he believes the local therapies will resolve the pain complaint.

In spite of having the identical diagnoses and systemic contributor, the preferred therapy changed with different contributing factors.

The initial TMD evaluation involves interviewing the patient about his or her symptoms, potential contributing factors, and potential non-TMD. The interview most influences the patient's final management approach and generally brings to light concerns that the practitioner will need to evaluate during the clinical examination.

The clinical examination will help to confirm or rule out the structures involved in the patient's complaints and other suspected disorders that may contribute to these complaints. Imaging may be appropriate, but, in our experience, it rarely changes the management approach derived from the patient interview and examination.

In the late 1980s when one of the authors was in the U.S. Air Force, an experience demonstrated that patients with TMD symptoms needed a more thorough evaluation for potential non-TMD than what most dentists provided. A physician asked if he knew that one of the dentists who worked for him had diagnosed someone with TMD when the patient actually had meningitis. After reviewing the

patient's dental record, he found that she had been referred by the emergency room physician for possible TMD. The patient told the dentist she had been previously diagnosed with TMD, had an occlusal appliance, and believed she was having a relapse of this disorder. The dentist palpated her masticatory muscles and TMJs and found that the muscles were tight and tender to palpation. The dentist confirmed for the patient that she had TMD, gave her TMD self-management instructions, and told her she should see her civilian dentist to have her appliance adjusted (as she was not an active-duty military patient). At the time, it appeared to him the dentist performed an appropriate evaluation and provided an accurate diagnosis.

The emergency room record was then reviewed to obtain a better perspective of what had transpired. It was documented that the patient also told the emergency room physician that she had previously been diagnosed with TMD, had an occlusal appliance, and believed she was having a relapse of this disorder. The physician found that she had firm masticatory and cervical muscles and a fever, and referred her to the dentist for a TMD evaluation and to a neurologist. When the patient saw the neurologist, he did a spinal tap and found that she had meningitis.

This disheartening experience inspired him to research everything he could concerning disorders that mimic TMD. Lists were made of how their symptoms differed from TMD and a fairly brief list of questions was finally formulated that dentists can use to warn themselves that a patient may have a non-TMD condition that is mimicking TMD [4]. This questionnaire has been used ever since and modified as new information became available [5–7]. This questionnaire is certainly not foolproof, but it is the best this

author can formulate to alert him of potential non-TMD disorders, contributing factors, and symptom patterns.

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1

Patient Interview

FAQs

Q What should be done if a patient reports having a temporomandibular joint (TMJ) Teflon-Proplast implant, Silastic implant, or TMJ prostheses?

A A specific protocol has been recommended for TMJ Teflon-Proplast and Silastic implants and joint prostheses [1]. Follow-up for these is beyond the scope of this book. If the practitioner is unsure of the implant or prosthesis type and management, it is recommended that the practitioner refer the patient to, or work in conjunction with, someone who has greater expertise in this area.

Q What are the different situations in which you recommend I refer a patient to someone who has greater expertise in this area?

A Table 1.4 provides a list of histories and symptoms that would be identified during the patient interview, for which most general dentists would refer a patient to a practitioner with greater expertise. Table 3.4 provides additional characteristics that would be identified during the clinical exam, for which most general dentists would refer a patient to a practitioner with greater expertise.

Q What is secondary gain and how common is it among temporomandibular disorder (TMD) patients?

A Secondary gain is a situation in which the patient is rewarded for having TMD; for example, the patient receives disability payments or is excused from undesirable chores or work. Clinically, this is not commonly observed among TMD patients, but, if it is present, the patient may not relate improvement from any therapy.

Q What should be done when a patient appears to have a tooth causing or contributing to the TMD symptoms?

A The symptoms that suggest that a tooth is causing or contributing to the TMD symptoms are provided in Items 9 and 10 in Chapter 2, and a recommended approach to determine whether the tooth is causing or contributing to a patient's TMD symptoms is provided in "Intraoral Examination" in Chapter 3.

A recommended "Initial Patient Questionnaire" is available on the book's website and may be reproduced or printed for your patients to complete. The questionnaire is designed to efficiently use the time spent interviewing patients. The practitioner's customary medical

history form should be used in conjunction with this questionnaire.

● Quick Consult

Collecting Symptom History

The “Initial Patient Questionnaire” is designed to efficiently use the time spent interviewing patients and should be used in conjunction with the practitioner’s customary medical history form.

The practitioner may wish to add an additional page to obtain medical and dental insurance information and the name and address of the individual who recommended that the patient come to your office, in addition to the name and address of the patient’s physician and dentist. It is comforting to a referring provider to receive a letter acknowledging that the referral was appropriate and providing your findings and recommended management. This also tends to encourage the referring provider to recommend your office the next time a patient with a similar complaint needs to be managed. A copy of this letter is often sent to the patient’s physician and dentist (if not the referring doctor); a release statement is included in the “Initial Patient Questionnaire” for this purpose.

The questionnaire appears to keep patients from elaborating in nonproductive discussions or becoming irritated by the number of questions asked, and prevents the practitioner from forgetting to ask relevant information. Clinical experience suggests that a patient’s responses are not always accurate, and the examiner needs to review the answers with the patient. For better patient recall, it appears best if the patient arrives 15 minutes prior to the appointment and completes the questionnaire just prior to the appointment. During the patient interview, the practitioner usually needs to ask the patient to elaborate on some of the answers.

● Quick Consult

Confirming Patient Responses

Clinical experience suggests that a patient’s responses are not always accurate, and the examiner needs to review the answers with the patient.

▼ Technical Tip

Assisting Patient Recall

For better patient recall, it appears best if the patient arrives 15 minutes prior to the appointment and completes the questionnaire just prior to the appointment.

Chapter 2, “Review of the ‘Initial Patient Questionnaire,’” presents the key points for each of the questions and is designed to help a practitioner quickly evaluate a patient’s responses. Many of the questions are self-explanatory, but additional discussion for some of the questions, as well as supplementary information, is provided as follows:

Item 1 (On the diagram below, please shade the areas of your pain:) provides a quick overview of the patient’s pain locations. From the patient’s shaded areas, we observe whether the patient’s pain appears to be from (i) the masseter muscle or TMJ (the most common TMD pain locations); (ii) the posterior neck region and locations where neck pain commonly causes referred pain (e.g. periorbital, forehead, and temporalis regions [2, 3]); (iii) the anterior neck region, in which we will attempt to identify whether this is due to a local problem or referred pain (6% of patients with cardiac ischemia only have craniofacial pain, and the anterior neck region is the most common location for referred ischemia pain to appear among these patients [4–8]); or (iv) other types of pain patterns (e.g. sinus pain).

Items 4 and 5 (What makes it feel worse? and What makes it feel better?) provide

insight as to whether the patient's symptoms are due to TMD. One study found that 99% of TMD patients reported their pain was modified by movement, function, parafunctional activity, and/or rest. Intuitively, one would expect movement, function, and parafunctional activity to worsen TMD pain, while rest would improve TMD pain. This is a very powerful way to try to identify patients whose pain is and is not due to TMD. Contrarily, 9% related at least one aspect of their pain was improved by a specific movement; for example, occasionally TMD patients tell us that chewing gum, popping the TMJ, and so on, improve their TMD pain [9].

Item 6 (What treatments have you received?), with additional inquiries, gives an indication of which interventions were previously beneficial for the patient. For example, if the patient found that an occlusal appliance (which the patient no longer has) resolved the symptoms, then fabricating another appliance should be very beneficial. Reinforce to the patient that using the intervention (e.g. application of heat) he or she previously found beneficial can again be beneficial. If the patient has previously received the therapies the practitioner traditionally provides but without satisfactory benefit, the practitioner may consider a review of their initial diagnosis, alter management strategy, or refer the patient to someone with greater expertise in this area.

TMJ implants composed of Teflon-Proplast and Silastic have a history of fragmenting, causing a foreign-body response that results in progressive degeneration of the condyle and glenoid fossa. A specific protocol has been recommended for these implants and joint prostheses [1]. Follow-up for these is beyond the scope of this book. If a practitioner is unsure of the implant or prosthesis type and management, it is recommended that the practitioner refer the patient to, or work in conjunction with, someone who has greater expertise in this area.

Item 7 (When is your pain the worst?) will often help identify the time when significant contributing factors are present. Patients

with sleep parafunctional behaviors usually have an increase in pain when they first awake, whereas patients with awake parafunctional behaviors have an increase in pain during the day or evening. The practitioner may be able to elicit more specific periods, for example, during or after driving, or when using the computer.

⊗ Focal Point

Patients with sleep parafunctional behaviors usually have an increase in pain when they first awake, whereas patients with awake parafunctional behaviors have an increase in pain during the day or evening.

⊙ Quick Consult

Observing for Significant Contributing Factors

When discussing a patient's symptom pattern, a practitioner may be able to elicit specific periods when significant contributing factors are present, for example, during or after driving, or when using the computer.

Item 8 (What does the pain keep you from doing?) gives the practitioner a sense for how much the pain is affecting the patient's life. This may correlate with how motivated the patient will be to participate in therapy and the level of therapy the patient may be interested in receiving. Occasionally, this answer is out of proportion with other features of the examination; for example, the patient is unable to work, but has only minimal palpation tenderness. Additional questions may reveal the patient continues to participate in other activities, such as yelling at basketball games. This inconsistency may suggest that other factors are involved, commonly referred to as **secondary gain** [10].

Item 9 (Is your pain...) helps identify some possible conditions for a patient's pain.

Patients most commonly characterize TMD pain as having an ache, pressure, or dull pain quality. If throbbing is one of the components, generally, the patient’s disorder falls within one or more of the following three situations:

First, some patients report their pain is an ache, pressure, or of dull quality and, when it worsens, its quality may change to throbbing. The patient may have nausea, photophobia, and/or phonophobia associated with the throbbing pain. For these patients, clinically it appears that, if the ache, pressure, or dull pain can be satisfactorily reduced, this can prevent the pain sequence from escalating to the throbbing level.

● Quick Consult

Reducing Throbbing Pain

Clinically, it appears that if a patient relates the ache, pressure, or dull pain worsens to throbbing and can be satisfactorily reduced, this prevents the pain from escalating to the throbbing level.

In a second situation, the patient does not report that an ache, pressure, or dull pain progresses into throbbing pain. The source of the two types of pain may be from different sources, and the throbbing pain may not respond to TMD therapy. In this situation, the practitioner may wish to perform an occlusal appliance therapy trial and, if it is not effective, consider a referral to the patient’s physician or neurologist for a probable neurovascular condition often diagnosed as migraine. Studies suggest that some migraines respond to TMD therapy, but characteristics for identifying which migraines respond are not well established [11, 12].

For other patients, the throbbing pain may be **referred pain** from an oral problem (most commonly a tooth). Sometimes the perceived painful **site** (e.g. masseter muscle and/or

TMJ) appears as the **source** to the patient, whereas the actual source (e.g. a tooth) has minimal symptoms. This is similar to how a patient suffering from a heart attack may perceive pain only in the left arm, whereas the pain’s source is the heart. Management for the pain must be directed toward the source, not the site where it is felt.

● Quick Consult

Observing for Throbbing Pain Sources

Throbbing pain may be referred pain from a pulpitis.

Innervations from tooth pulps and the masticatory musculoskeletal system appear to travel along similar pathways, so pain from one can sensitize common areas within the CNS, causing the pain to be perceived as from the other. There are also more nerves that enter the CNS than there are neurons to transfer the information to higher CNS centers, requiring pain input to **converge** from multiple sources (Figure 1.1). This may also cause pain from one source to be perceived as from the other. Additionally, muscles often respond to pain in the region by tightening, increasing the TMJ loading, causing pain in the masticatory muscles as well as the TMJ. Clinically, this sequence of events may manifest as a masticatory muscle or the TMJ being perceived as the source of the odontogenic pain, and upon palpating the tender structure identified as the pain’s site, the patient relates this reproduced or intensified pain as the chief complaint.

A study of patients suspected of having TMD by their dentists, but whose TMD pain upon additional examination was found primarily to be referred odontogenic pain, reported that (i) none of the periapical radiographs revealed apical pathosis, and (ii) patients related that palpating the perceived painful site often reproduced their pain [13].

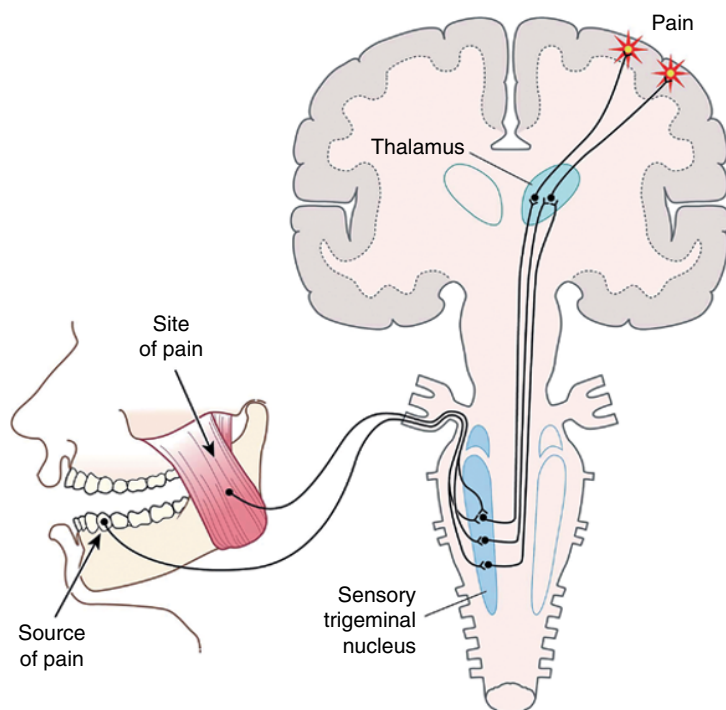


Figure 1.1 A depiction of central convergence enabling tooth pulp pain to be perceived as masseter muscle pain.

The study found three helpful characteristics for identifying patients who have a tooth causing or contributing to their TMD symptoms: (i) the pain wakes the patient at night, (ii) the pain increases when the patient lies down, and (iii) the pain increases when the patient drinks hot or cold liquids; these are provided in Table 1.1. These patients also had a throbbing pain quality, which can also be due to TMD. Evaluating and treating referred odontogenic pain are discussed further in Item 10 and in “Intraoral Examination” in Chapter 3. A case scenario of a patient with this disorder is presented in “Case 1” in Part V.

Burning is infrequently reported by TMD patients, whereas most neuropathic pains in the masticatory system include a burning quality [14, 15]. Clinical experience has shown that if burning is combined with the typical TMD pain qualities (ache, pressure, or dull pain), usually the burning correspondingly resolves with the ache, pressure,

Table 1.1 Symptoms suggesting that the patients may have a tooth causing or contributing to his or her TMD symptoms.

- The TMD pain wakes the patient at night.
- The TMD pain increases when the patient lies down.
- The TMD pain increases when the patient drinks hot or cold liquids.

or dull pain from TMD therapy. If burning is the patient’s most prominent pain quality or did not resolve from initial TMD therapy, the practitioner may wish to refer the patient to someone with greater expertise in this area to evaluate the patient for neuropathic pain. A method for identifying these practitioners is provided in “Practitioners with TMD Expertise and Fellowship Programs” which is available on the book’s website in the file “Sources for Additional TMD Information.”

In addition to those already discussed, many other pain qualities are possible, for

example, an electrical or stinging sensation. Knowledge of a patient's pain qualities will help a practitioner determine whether TMD a high probability of benefiting the patient or whether these therapies may delay the evaluation for another, more probable, disorder.

Item 10 attempts to identify whether the practitioner should be suspicious that odontogenic pain, neck pain, or sinus congestion may be contributing to the patient's complaint. Clinical experience has shown that TMD pain rarely wakes patients up during sleep, but odontogenic pain and neck pain commonly wake patients during sleep [16]. The patient may not be aware that the neck is the source and may only perceive pain at a different referred pain location. Identifying referred pain from the neck is discussed further in "TMD Palpations" in Chapter 3.

◎ Quick Consult

Observing for Sinus Congestion Contribution

Patients with sinus congestion tend to find an aggravation when they lower their head position, that is, lie down or bend forward.

Historically, patients with odontalgia tend to report their pain wakes them during sleep, increases when they lie down, and/or increases when they drink hot or cold liquids. If a patient responds positively to one or more of these questions or has throbbing pain, this should raise a suspicion that a tooth may be causing or contributing to the TMD symptoms [13].

◎ Quick Consult

Observing for Odontalgia Contribution

Historically, patients with odontalgia tend to report their pain wakes them during sleep, increases when they lie down, and/or increases when they drink hot or cold liquids.

Sometimes patients incorrectly answer "Yes" to the question "Does your pain increase when you drink hot or cold liquids?" When these patients elaborate, it becomes apparent that cold only causes tooth discomfort rather than aggravating their facial pain. Clinical experience has shown that thermal sensitivity of the teeth is common among TMD patients.

When the practitioner suspects that a tooth may be causing or contributing to the TMD symptoms, further evaluation is indicated. A recommended evaluation approach and treatment considerations are provided in "Intraoral Examination" in Chapter 3.

Patients with sinus congestion tend to find an aggravation when they lower their head position, that is, lie down or bend forward. If the patient responds positively to either of these questions, it is recommended that the practitioner further inquire as to whether sinus congestion appears to contribute to the pain; for example, whether the patient finds decongestants or antibiotics help relieve the pain. If the patient is unaware of the impact from these and the practitioner suspects sinus congestion involvement, the practitioner may wish to determine the degree the sinus congestion is contributing to the TMD symptoms. He or she may do this by providing a trial with an oral decongestant, nasal spray decongestant, and/or antibiotic (e.g. Sudafed [pseudoephedrine HCl] 60mg, 1 tab q 4 to 6 hours; Afrin [oxymetazoline HCl] 0.05%, two sprays in each nostril q 12 hours; and/or Augmentin [amoxicillin/clavulanate] 875mg, 1 tab b.i.d. for 10 days [all have generic formulations]), listed in Table 1.2. If the sinus congestion is of recent onset and within a week of the patient having a cold, the sinus disorder is probably due to a virus and antibiotics may not be beneficial [17].

If the sinus congestion is a chronic disorder, it is recommended that the patient be referred to the patient's physician for evaluation and long-term management of the sinus problem. Eliciting pain from palpating over the sinuses can rule in the probability of sinus involvement, but not eliciting pain

Table 1.2 Medications to temporarily reduce sinus pain.

| Category | Medication | Instructions |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Oral decongestant | 60mg pseudoephedrine HCl | 1 tab q 4 to 6 hours |
| Nasal spray decongestant | 0.05% oxymetazoline HCl | 2 sprays in each nostril q 12 hours |
| Antibiotic | 875 mg amoxicillin/clavulanate | 1 tab b.i.d. for 10 days |

upon palpation cannot rule out sinus involvement [15]. A case scenario of a patient with chronic sinusitis is presented in “Case 3” in Part V.

Items 11–13 attempt to quantify the pain, requiring the patient to delineate its intensity, frequency, and duration. The first two questions introduce patients to rating their pain intensity from 0 to 10 (0 = no pain; 10 = pain as bad as it can be) and give the practitioner a sense of the patient’s pain history. This numerical rating system (NRS) is the most effective manner we have at this time for rating pain intensity [18]. A concise and commonly used terminology for frequency is “constant” (always present), “daily” (occurs every day, but not constantly), “weekly” (occurs every week, but not daily), and so on. Duration may be momentary, “intermittent” (fluctuates from being present to being absent), the average number of seconds to hours, or constant. The pain may vary greatly and can be difficult to quantify accurately. For brevity, it is often clinically satisfactory to just document the average intensity and frequency in the patient’s record, but in some situations, the practitioner may want to include the extremes and/or durations.

Item 14 attempts to identify unusual symptoms, which may be suggestive of other disorders that could mimic or coexist with TMD. For example, a progressively increasing open bite of the anterior teeth may be from the TMJ losing its vertical height, generally due to severe TMJ osteoarthritis and/or idiopathic condylar resorption [19]. As the condylar height collapses, the most posterior ipsilateral (affected side) tooth becomes the

first tooth to contact, acts as a fulcrum, and progressively creates an open bite for the remaining dentition. The open bite generally begins on the contralateral (nonaffected side) anterior teeth and progressively spreads bilaterally until the only tooth that contacts is the most posterior ipsilateral tooth. This disorder and its management are complicated and beyond the scope of this book. Practitioners observing this complaint may wish to refer the patient to someone with greater expertise in this area.

It is not uncommon for a patient to relate autonomic changes, which are induced by central sensitization produced by the pain. These can include the face becoming red, puffy, or having thermal changes near the area of the pain; the eye becoming bloodshot or tearing; and/or the nose running or becoming congested. These autonomic changes occur when the pain is aggravated and should resolve when it lessens or resolves [20]. They are sometimes reproduced when the practitioner aggravates the pain during the palpation evaluation.

Headache is another symptom patients report for this item. If the patient relates this is a new severe headache, there are many serious disorders that can cause this symptom, and the patient needs to see a physician to evaluate the patient for these potential causes.

This book recommends management for TMD and cervical pain. There is an interrelationship between TMD pain, cervical pain, and chronic headaches, and many therapies used to treat TMD and cervical pain are also used to treat chronic headaches [21, 22].

We recommend that you manage the patient’s TMD pain and refer for cervical

pain, as the symptoms warrant, as outlined in this book, and inform the patient that there is potential it may also benefit the chronic headache. If the patient does not obtain satisfactory headache benefit, we recommend that the patient be referred to a neurologist for pharmaceutical management.

Management of TMD and the cervical region has been shown to be beneficial for tension-type, migraine without aura, and migraine with aura headaches. The degree of headache improvement is quite varied among these studies, and no clinical characteristics have been identified for which patients are more likely to obtain headache improvement from TMD or cervical therapies [11, 23].

Our recommendations for chronic headache patients are provided in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Recommendations for chronic headache patients.

| With headache diagnoses of tension-type, migraine without aura, migraine with aura, or combinations of these headaches | |
|--|---|
| Presentation | Therapy |
| If the patient has significant TMD pain that is worthy of receiving TMD therapy, | Provide TMD therapy and the patient may obtain significant headache improvement from this intervention. |
| If the patient has significant neck pain that is worthy of receiving neck therapy or the headache is reproduced when the neck is palpated, | Refer patient for neck therapy and the patient may obtain significant headache improvement from this intervention. |
| If patient's headaches cannot be adequately controlled with medications by physicians and the patient has masticatory or neck tenderness, | Provide TMD therapy or refer patient for neck therapy, starting with the more tender area. The patient may obtain significant headache improvement from one or both of these interventions. |

Items 15–17 provide a rapid tool to screen for a non-TMD that may be the cause of the pain or negatively impact it [24, 25]. The practitioner can skip each question the patient answers with a “No” but needs to inquire further and consider the comments in a “Review of the ‘Initial Patient Questionnaire’” (Chapter 2) for each question with a “Yes” answer.

Two disorders that are moderately prevalent among TMD patients often negatively influence TMD symptoms and management, and the practitioner must be very observant to identify them. The first is **cervical pain**; one study found that 51% of TMD patients had cervical pain [26]. Cervical pain may not only directly affect the masticatory system and its ability to respond to therapy, but it may also cause referred pain to the masticatory structures, which can add to a patient’s TMD symptoms or be the sole cause of the TMD symptoms [2, 3, 25].

● Quick Consult

Observing Cervical Pain and Fibromyalgia Effects on TMD Therapy

Cervical pain and fibromyalgia often negatively influence TMD symptoms and management response.

Recommended cervical palpation techniques to identify referred pain from the cervical region to the head and face are provided in “TMD Palpations” in Chapter 3. The scope of clinical practice for TMD has been determined to include the diagnosis and management of disorders affecting the entire head and neck. This is consistent with the historical precedent in dentistry and within the scope of current dental practice [27].

The other disorder that practitioners must be very astute in identifying is **fibromyalgia**. It is characterized by widespread body pain, multiple tender points over the body, poor sleep, stiffness, and generalized fatigue. Only about 4% of the general population has

fibromyalgia, whereas 18–23% of TMD patients have it [25, 28].

It has been shown that TMD patients with fibromyalgia, widespread body pain, or neck pain do not respond as well to TMD therapies as do those without these comorbid disorders [29–31]. Therefore, it is important to identify patients with these disorders and inform them about the potential negative impact this may have on their management plan. If it appears a patient is not receiving adequate therapy for the coexisting disorder, it is recommended that the patient discuss management alternatives with his or her medical provider or be referred to someone who specializes in the area. Rheumatologists or physical medicine and rehabilitation (PMR) physicians generally specialize in fibromyalgia and widespread body pain disorders.

It is recommended that patients suspected of having fibromyalgia be referred to a physician for definitive diagnosis and management. There have been instances in which patients diagnosed with fibromyalgia by rheumatologists or PMR physicians have had their fibromyalgia advance to other disorders, such as multiple sclerosis [32].

Items 18, 19, and 20 ask about TMJ noise and the inability to open or close the mouth. The latter can be of muscle or TMJ origin. A “TMJ Disc–Condyle Complex Disorders” diagram is available on the book’s website and may be reproduced or printed for your patients. It is helpful for explaining the cause of their TMJ noise and/ or inability to open or close.

● Quick Consult

Explaining Mechanical Disorder

A “TMJ Disc–Condyle Complex Disorders” diagram is available on the book’s website and is helpful for explaining the cause of a patient’s TMJ noise and/ or inability to open or close.

The diagram is broken into four sections, with the top left section providing a view of the skull with the zygomatic arch removed so the entire temporalis muscle can be visualized. This enables the provider to demonstrate how the temporalis muscle functions and how clenching or other oral behaviors can overuse this muscle, thereby causing fatigue and pain similar to that caused by overuse of any muscle in the body. The zygomatic arch can be drawn in and the masseter muscle drawn over the ramus, and a similar discussion about muscle-overuse pain can be provided. The lateral pterygoid muscle can also be drawn to explain the symptoms and therapies for lateral pterygoid spasm (explained in Chapter 9, “Lateral Pterygoid Spasm”). The articular eminence is also displayed so that condylar subluxation (the condyle catches in front of the eminence) or luxation (the condyle locks in front of the eminence) and its management may be demonstrated. Conservative therapies for these disorders are provided in Chapter 11.

To orient the patient for the next section of the diagrams, point to the ear on the skull and then to the ear in the top right section. This drawing provides an avenue to explain the “normal” disc–condyle relationship. If the patient has a TMJ click or pop, the most probable situation is that the elastic ligament (the retrodiscal tissue, in addition to its attachment complex) is stretched and the disc–condyle relationship looks like the top drawing in the bottom left section in which the disc is displaced. As the condyle translates forward (e.g. during opening), it moves into the center (intermediate zone) of the disc (the reduced position), and, as the individual closes, the condyle retrudes off the disc. This is commonly referred to as **TMJ disc displacement with reduction**, which is the terminology that is used in this book.

This section can visually explain the opening and/or closing click. Sometimes patients are also informed about how the tension in the closure muscles (temporalis, masseter, and medial pterygoid) brace the condyle in a superior position, which may promote a

greater mechanical interference between the condyle and disc [33]. Clinically, patients report this effect by their TMJ click, catch, or lock occurring more frequently or with greater intensity when they are stressed, while eating especially with foods that are of a tougher consistency, or after clenching their teeth.

For patients experiencing limited translation due to the disc blocking their normal opening (**TMJ disc displacement without reduction with limited opening or closed lock**), the bottom right diagram can help visually explain the mechanical problem and management. This is discussed in Chapter 5, “TMD Diagnostic Categories,” and in Chapter 10., “Intermittent and Continuous forms of TMJ Disc Displacement without Reduction with Limited Opening.”

Many patients report the presence or history of TMJ noises (Item 18), since TMJ clicking or popping is very prevalent among the TMD and general populations [34, 35]. These noises may occur with opening and/or closing, can fluctuate in intensity, and occur sporadically. If a patient has a TMJ click or pop that the practitioner can feel, the most likely diagnosis is TMJ disc displacement with reduction [2, 36, 37]. If the joint noise is crepitus, then the most likely diagnosis is **degenerative joint disease**; see Chapter 5 for an explanation of this terminology [32]. A more accurate assessment of the disc-condyle alignment can be obtained by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the TMJ, but the findings rarely change the management approach, and MRI is rarely indicated at the initial TMD evaluation [38]. For more information on TMJ imaging, see Chapter 4, “Imaging.”

🕒 Quick Consult

Requesting MRIs

MRI findings rarely change the management approach, and MRI is rarely indicated at the initial TMD evaluation.

The inability to open wide (Item 19) is generally due to either a TMJ disorder (e.g. disc displacement without reduction with limited opening or closed lock) or a muscle disorder. Discussing the onset and its history is often beneficial and may aid in determining the cause. If this limitation is intermittent, patients with a disc displacement with reduction with intermittent locking are usually aware that the TMJ is blocked at the opening where the TMJ normally clicks or pops. Typically, they suddenly have a restricted opening, which just as abruptly releases, allowing them to obtain their normal opening once again. The TMJ locking disorder may be continuous, but often has a history of being intermittent. Conversely, an intermittent muscle disorder generally develops and resolves slowly for each episode.

🔍 Focal Point

If a TMJ disc intermittently blocks a patient from opening wide, the patient is usually aware that the TMJ is blocked at the opening where the TMJ normally clicks or pops, it suddenly occurs, and just as abruptly releases; conversely, an intermittent muscle disorder generally develops and resolves slowly for each episode.

If a patient has a restricted opening, the practitioner may be able to determine its origin by stretching the mouth wider. This is usually done by placing the index finger over the incisal edges of the mandibular incisors and the thumb over the incisal edges of the maxillary incisors and pressing the teeth apart by moving the fingers in a scissor-type motion (Figure 1.2). The patient will usually feel tightness or pain at the location of the restriction, and the patient is asked to point to this source. From clinical experience, not all patients accurately point to the stretched discomfort location, and it is necessary to palpate the TMJ and musculature to reproduce the stretched discomfort in order to accurately identify its origin.



Figure 1.2 Stretching a restricted opening to determine the origin of the restriction.

▼ Technical Tip

Determining Origin of a Patient's Restricted Opening

The practitioner may be able to determine a patient's restricted opening origin by stretching the mouth wider and determining the location of the created discomfort.

It should be kept in mind that there are other potential, though less common, causes for patients having a restricted opening. Generally, these patients complain only about a restricted opening, not pain [11]. Some examples of these are TMJ ankylosis, contracture, coronoid hyperplasia and tumor [39–41]. These disorders are beyond the scope of this book, and if the practitioner suspects the patient may have one of them, he or she may wish to refer the patient to someone with greater expertise in this area.

Patients may report episodes of being unable to close their mouth (Item 20). From

clinical experience, there are several common causes for a positive response to this question. If the patient reports the TMJ catches or locks at an opening of 45 mm or wider, the condyle has the potential of being in front of the eminence (TMJ subluxation or luxation). Among patients with this complaint, multiple disc–condyle relations have been observed, and investigators have postulated that the catching or locking is due to (i) the articular eminence obstructing the posterior movement of the disc–condyle unit, (ii) the disc obstructing the posterior movement of the condyle, or (iii) a combination of the two [42]. Traditional TMD therapies have been shown to improve this condition [43]. Conservative therapies for TMJ subluxation and luxation are provided in Chapter 11.

If the patient's TMJ catches or locks during closure in a range of approximately 10–35 mm, the articular eminence should not be involved, and it would most probably be only the disc that is obstructing the posterior movement of the condyle. There is no consistent disc–condyle relationship for this interference, but it is speculated the most common scenario is that the patient has a TMJ disc displacement with reduction. The interference occurs during closure when the condyle is in the reduced position and the condyle has difficulty moving or is temporarily unable to move below the posterior band of the disc; this is the typical location of the closing click. This closing catch or lock occurs similarly to the way in which an opening click's mechanical interference worsens to become an opening catch or lock. The bottom left diagram of the “TMJ Disc–Condyle Complex Disorders” handout (available on the book's website) may help to visually explain this mechanical interference to patients. From clinical experience, this problem resolves with traditional conservative TMD therapies.

A third common cause of patients reporting an inability to close is a **lateral pterygoid spasm**. In this situation, the inferior lateral pterygoid muscle is in constant involuntary contraction at a partially shortened position. This is similar to the calf muscle cramp that

has awakened many of us during sleep. Upon awaking, the individual notes the calf pain and calf cramp in which he or she has difficulty and increased pain when attempting to move the foot up or down. A patient with a lateral pterygoid spasm similarly has difficulty and increased pain when attempting to translate the condyle forward or retrude the jaw so the teeth fit into maximum intercuspation. The patient usually complains of the inability to put the ipsilateral posterior teeth together without excruciating pain, the teeth are usually separated by a fraction of a millimeter to a few millimeters, and the first tooth contact is in the area of the contralateral canine (if the patient has normal tooth alignment) [44]. Since the patient has difficulty translating forward, he or she usually also has a marked limited opening. A diagnostic test and therapies are provided in Chapter 9, “Lateral Pterygoid Spasm.”

Items 21–27 ask about potential contributing factors to a patient’s TMD. Some contributing factors are not asked about in this questionnaire, but will become apparent when the provider or staff member reviews the “TMD Self-Management Therapies” handout with the patient (e.g. gum chewing, caffeine consumption, or stomach sleeping). This handout is available on the book’s website.

Poor sleep may constitute the inability to fall asleep, stay asleep, or awake feeling rested (Item 21). Poor sleep has been shown to correlate with increased muscle pain and can be a predictor of patients who will respond poorly to TMD therapy [45–47]. A good system to use to evaluate poor-sleep severity is to ask the patient to rate his or her sleep quality between 0 and 10. Intuitively, when most of us do not get adequate sleep, we tend to feel more aches and pain, be more irritable, and so on. The effects of inadequate sleep tend to contribute to a TMD patient’s symptoms on both a physical and psychosocial basis [46]. From clinical experience, when a patient relates that poor sleep is primarily due to TMD pain, it has been observed that, when the TMD pain resolves, generally, the sleep problem also resolves. To ensure a

patient’s needs and desires are met, when other causes of poor sleep are involved, the provider may ask the patient to discuss this with his or her physician, refer the patient for relaxation therapy, or refer the patient to someone who specializes in sleep disorders. If the patient has poor sleep and awakes with morning TMD pain, the practitioner may wish to prescribe amitriptyline or nortriptyline; see “Tricyclic Antidepressants” in Chapter 17 for additional information.

It is important that the practitioner identify whether obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) may be the cause for the patient awaking feeling tired. Patients with OSA may also awake with a headache that can be similar to a headache from heavy sleep parafunctional behaviors. Patients with OSA generally relate that they snore loudly at night, occasionally awake gasping for air, are drowsy throughout the day, and easily fall asleep during the day. The provider may ask the patient to discuss this with his or her physician and may request a sleep study to determine the cause for the poor sleep [47].

Patients may relate they do not sleep well due to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), in which they may awake with nightmares where they re-experience the traumatic event. PTSD is strongly linked with TMD symptoms [48], and if these patients have not received pharmaceutical and psychological therapies to help control this disorder, they should be referred for these services. Some PTSD patients who are “maximally pharmaceutically managed” and receiving psychological therapy still awake from their PTSD nightmares with all of the muscles in their body intensely contracted. Our clinical experience with these PTSD patients is that a maxillary acrylic stabilization appliance helps reduce the amount of masticatory pain they awake with from these nightmares and helps to protect the teeth from fracturing. If they do not receive sufficient benefit from this, they may find an opposing mandibular soft thermoplastic stabilization appliance, as described in “Soft Thermoplastic Stabilization Appliance” in Chapter 12, provides additional benefit [49].

Patients with fibromyalgia may also relate that they do not sleep well. These patients have widespread body muscle pain and fibromyalgia is discussed earlier under Items 15–17.

Occasionally, patients relate their TMD symptoms awake them from their sleep. Clinical experience suggests that pain of this severity is generally not due to TMD, but most commonly due to tooth pulp or cervical pain being referred to the masticatory musculoskeletal system.

Focal Point

Poor sleep has been shown to correlate with an increase in muscle pain and can be a predictor of patients who will respond poorly to TMD therapy.

The usual portion of the day in which a patient feels most overwhelmed, tense, aggravated, or frustrated (Item 22) is an indicator as to the impact these feelings may have on the TMD symptoms. Patients with TMD tend to hold more tension in their jaws, clench their teeth, or engage in other nonfunctional activities during these times [50–52], and some may be aware of these behaviors. Some patients may hold their teeth together throughout the day and squeeze them during these times, whereas others are adamant that

they never touch their teeth, but after observing for these behaviors will later find they clench or tighten their masticatory muscles during such times. It is a challenge to help patients understand their unconscious awake behaviors that are contributing to their TMD symptoms. Some dentists train a psychologist or staff member to help patients recognize and control their awake contributing behaviors. A diary in which patients hourly record their TMD symptoms and tension levels often helps patients recognize and learn about these associations and thereby provides the motivation to change their tension levels.

Psychosocial stress may also increase sleep parafunctional activity. In one study [53], subjects wore devices to bed that recorded sleep EMG activity, and subjects were able to correlate higher sleep EMG activity with stressful life events (Figures 1.3 and 1.4).

Technical Tip

Reducing Tension Levels

A diary in which patients hourly record their TMD symptoms and tension levels often helps patients recognize and learn about these associations and thereby provides the motivation to change their tension levels and behaviors.

Figure 1.3 Correlation of increased sleep masseter muscle activity with stressful life events [53].

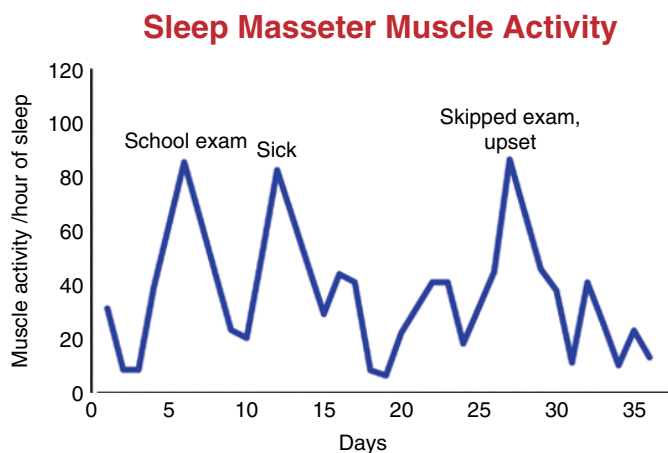




Figure 1.4 Correlation of increased and decreased sleep masseter muscle activity with more and less stressful life events, respectively [53].

Clinically, it has been observed that TMD patients often deny having stress because they relate the term “stress” to more significant events than they have in their lives. Terms that patients seem to acknowledge having that tend to be associated with these behaviors are “tension,” “aggravations,” “frustrations,” “concerns,” “busyness,” “overwhelmed,” “more of life’s stuff,” or “more of life’s situations.”

Once patients recognize they have one of these feelings, it is recommended that their preferred term be used in future discussions. Discuss the likelihood that this psychosocial contributor is associated with their pain because patients tend to hold more tension in their jaw muscles (also neck and shoulders if they also have pain or tenderness in these areas) during such times.

There are two approaches patients can use to reduce the symptoms related to these psychosocial contributors. They can learn to reduce the psychosocial contributors (using coping strategies, stress management, etc.) and/or become very aware of their propensity to tighten their muscles during such times and break this behavior. A combination is generally used when patients are referred to a psychologist for management of this problem.

Sometimes, a patient’s concerns are overwhelming, and the patient wants to discuss them with a trained professional and learn coping skills. Two examples of

referrals to a psychologist are available on the book’s website.

Patients with depression have been shown to not respond to TMD therapy as well as most other TMD patients [54], and the portion of the day in which a patient usually feels depressed (Item 23) is an indicator as to the impact this may have on the patient’s TMD symptoms. For providers to obtain a better feel for its significance, patients can be asked to rate their depression or other psychosocial contributor on a 0–10 scale. Clinical experience suggests that patients who are depressed and not open to discussing or receiving therapy for their depression minimize their answer with “seldom” or “never.” For patients who mark “always” or “half the time,” it is recommended that the practitioner discuss the patient’s depression and referral options, that is, primary medical provider (to discuss management options), psychologist (primarily manages through discussions), and/or psychiatrist (a physician who primarily manages with medications). Based on clinical experience, when a patient relates the depression is primarily due to TMD pain, the depression generally resolves when the TMD pain resolves.

Focal Point

Depression negatively influences TMD symptoms.

Suicide is one of the three leading causes of death for individuals aged 15–34 years, and adolescents and adults who suffer from chronic pain are at increased risk for suicide ideation and attempts [55–57]. If a patient relates he or she has thoughts of hurting himself or herself, or committing suicide (Item 24), you must determine lethality. Ask the patient whether he or she has a plan, a time selected, and the means selected of carrying this out (pills, gun, etc.). If the answer is “Yes” to any of these, the patient must immediately be evaluated by someone trained in psychosocial suicide assessment to determine whether suicide is imminent, that is, a clinical social worker, psychologist, psychiatrist, your local hospital’s suicide prevention team, the authority received by calling 911, or the police department’s emergency psychiatric evaluation team. Do not allow the patient to leave without an escort (i.e. a staff member, responsible family member, police, or hospital personnel sent to your office) unless he or she has been cleared by an appropriate person. Clearly document your findings, actions, and follow up on your referral. Your local suicide prevention hotline can provide information about resources available in your community, and you can obtain more information from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP; www.afsp.org).

A considerable amount of time spent singing or playing a musical instrument (Item 25)

may also significantly contribute to a patient’s TMD symptoms. The impact will vary with the instruments and the amount of time spent in the activity. It has been speculated that wind instruments, some string instruments (violin and viola), and singing have the greatest potential for contributing to TMD symptoms [58, 59]. A patient’s symptom time pattern should give an indication of the impact singing or playing the musical instrument has on the symptoms. Sometimes, these activities are the patient’s sole source of income, so the patient will have to weigh the cost and benefit of limiting or changing the intensity of these activities.

Studies that inquired numerous times throughout the day as to whether subjects were engaged in a nonfunctional tooth contact activity found that TMD subjects have their teeth in contact significantly more often than non-TMD subjects [51, 60]. It is common for many individuals to allow their opposing teeth to contact, but it appears when this behavior is excessive that it may be a significant contributor to TMD symptoms (Figure 1.5) [51]. It is recommended that patients never hold their teeth together except momentarily when swallowing (Item 26). This question nicely leads into discussing the patient’s awake behaviors and the importance of controlling them. The following analogy is used, demonstrating with my arm, to help the patient understand the impact holding the teeth together may have on his or her pain.

Figure 1.5 Alerted TMD patients and healthy control subjects every 20 minutes from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. and found that TMD patients were significantly more often engaged in a nonfunctional tooth contact activity [51].

