

AZ Sleep & TMJ
SOLUTIONS

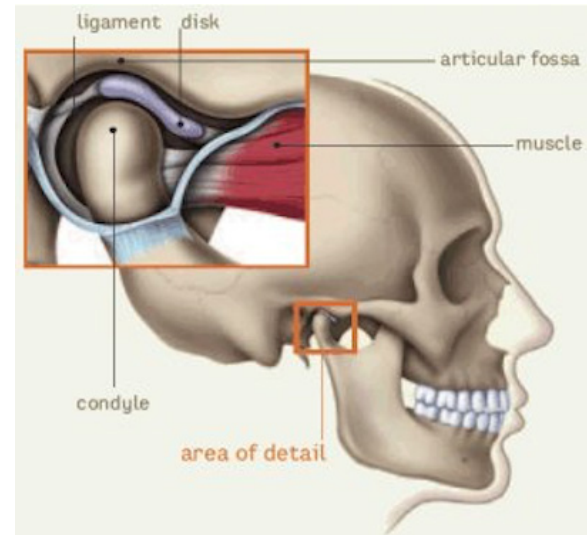
TMJ Disorder & Sleep Conditions: The Effects on Your Body



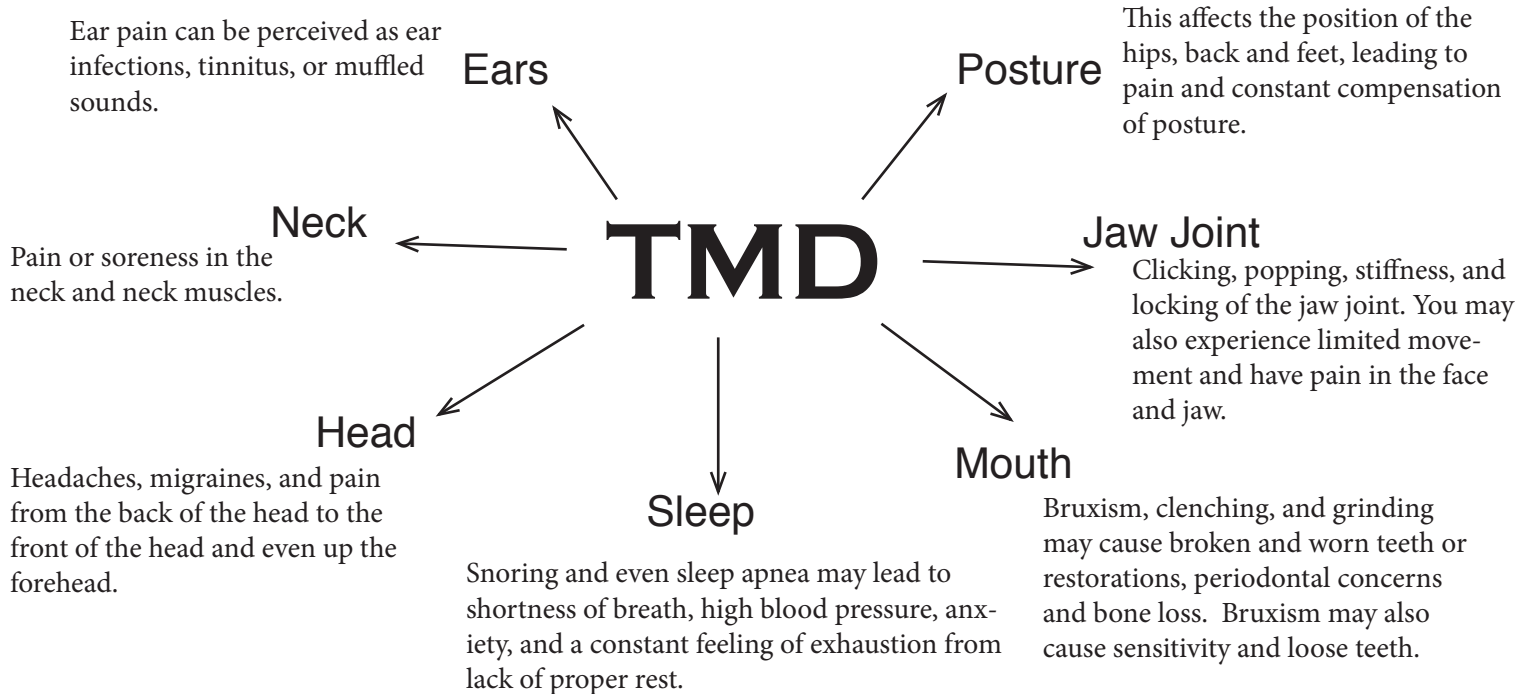
TMJ Disorders: Temporomandibular Joint Disorders

The mandible, or jaw, is the movable part of the head involving important functions of daily life, including chewing, swallowing and speaking. There are two major joints attaching the jaw to the skull; these joints are called temporomandibular joints, or TMJ for short. These joints also have small discs of cartilage covering each like a coat. Muscles attach to the bones and joints, allowing for smooth movement of the jaw.

There are many causes of dysfunction for such a complex system. Many people experiencing TMJ disorders, or TMD for short, may suffer from an unbalanced bite, airway issues, jaw joint injuries, and more. These will disrupt the proper function of the jaw joint and may lead to headaches, ear problems, postural issues relating to the neck and back, and even sleep-related conditions. Along with these ailments, people who suffer from TMJ disorders may also clench or grind their teeth, causing broken teeth and restorations, bone loss, loose teeth or periodontal disease.

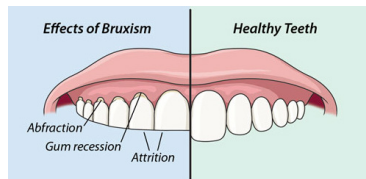


TMD Symptoms and Connections With Your Body

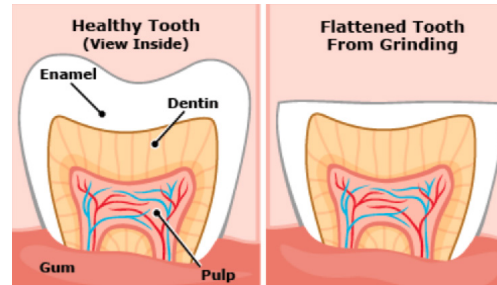


TMJ and Your Mouth

The jaw joints have a much closer relationship with the mouth than most realize. When the jaw joints are not functioning properly, they may cause clenching and grinding of the teeth, also known as bruxism. Poorly aligned teeth may also cause TMJ dysfunction. If someone has a “bad bite” or malocclusion, that person may be attempting to force teeth together in an unnatural way. The teeth continue to hit against one-another, breaking, weakening and wearing them down. When this occurs, the teeth, gums, bone level, and existing restorations



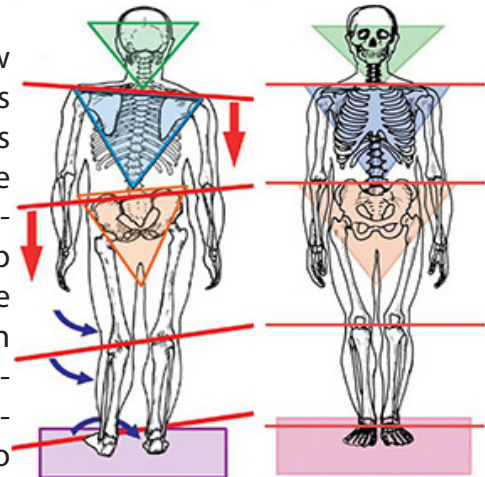
(such as crowns or fillings) can all be damaged and worn down from the heavy force of the



jaw joint. The pressure applied on the teeth causes “flexing”, which begins to make the bone around the tooth wear down. The gums may begin to recede and expose weaker structures of the teeth that are typically higher in sensitivity. Furthermore, permanent damage to the nerves can occur, leading to extensive dental work, such as root canals and implants

TMJ and Your Posture

It's hard to imagine how closely related posture and TMJ are and how much one can affect the other. When posture is unbalanced, it affects the muscles in the neck, back, pelvis and legs. Poor postural habits may lead to pain in the muscles. Muscle pain may lead to inadequate compensation, creating a chain-like reaction down the body. We relate postural issues to head position, shoulder position, or even hip position. This complex chain begins with our bite. TMJ and our bite can determine the position of the jaw, which then limits the position of our head, thereby determining the body's overall posture and balance. Many people carry their head too far forward, placing a tremendous amount of strain on the back and causing the rest of the body to adjust itself to compensate for misalignment.



Snoring and Your Sleep: The Connection with Your Health

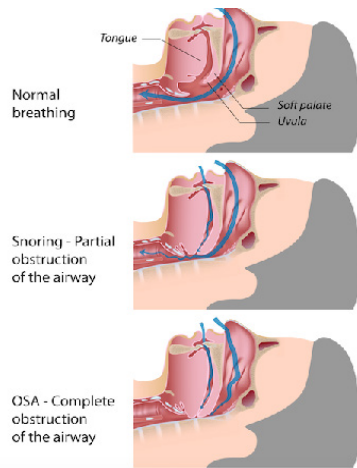
Snoring occurs when air is not able to move through the throat efficiently to the lungs. The sound is produced from the vibration of the soft palate and sides of the throat when air rushes against them. Causes of snoring may be attributed to allergies, a cold, structural issues in the mouth, nasal cavity and airway, or sleeping position.

Many people suffer from snoring, and feel it is normal. In the US alone, around 50% of people snore: 40% of adult men, and 25% of adult women have experienced a snoring episode at some point in life, or are habitual snorers. Aside from dry mouth and light sleep, snoring may lead to much more serious issues for those who suffer. Snoring is linked

to a number of serious health problems, including depression, anxiety, and heart disease. Snoring also causes vibration against the major

jugular veins in your neck and can build plaque in those walls, leading to risk of stroke. In addition, snoring may develop into sleep apnea and become more serious when a person stops breathing for at least ten seconds at a time, fifteen or more times in an hour. Breathing typically will resume from a gasp, body jerk, or a snort; this is considered Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA). Snoring may exist with or without sleep apnea being present,

but may still be the source of many health problems.



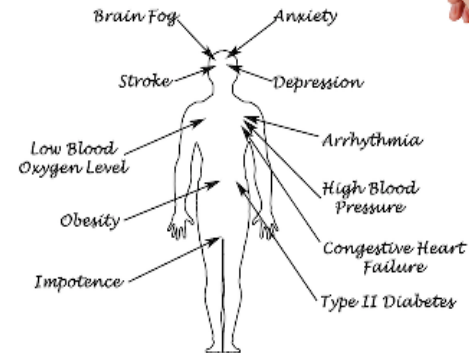
Sleep Apnea and Your Body

To help understand sleep apnea, it's important to understand the definition of apnea. Apnea is the Greek word meaning "want of breath." There are three types of sleep apnea: obstructive sleep apnea, central sleep apnea, and mixed sleep apnea. Obstructive sleep apnea is one of the most common forms of sleep apnea. It occurs when the airway becomes blocked. Central sleep apnea arises when signals from the brain normally telling you to breathe are absent. Mixed sleep apnea results when obstructive and central sleep apnea are combined.

When sleep apnea develops, many parts of a person's day-to-day life are affected from the lack of rest. The majority of the body's ability to heal itself occurs when the body is sleeping; so, without proper sleep, injuries and ailments may become more troublesome. The person suffering from sleep apnea may feel more tired during the day than normal. The link between TMJ and sleep disorders is one commonly overlooked. Sleep position, breathing and other obstructions occurring during sleep may all be affected by TMJ disorder.



Side Effects From Sleep Apnea



TMJ and Sleep Disorder Treatment Options at Pinnacle Peak Family Dentistry

While there are many philosophies and treatment options available for those who suffer from TMJ and sleep disorders, Dr. Sara Vizcarra provides an exceptional dental treatment option to a medical disorder. As a Diplomate of the American Board of Crainofacial Dental Sleep Medicine, Dr. Sara has had training in acquiring extensive diagnostics and testing for her patients to ensure they are properly treated at Pinnacle Peak Family Dentistry. Typically, she will prescribe non-invasive treatment options for her patients while providing a comfortable experience.

Services Offered at Pinnacle Peak Family Dentistry:



- Oral Sleep Appliance Therapy
- TMJ/TMD Orthotic Appliance Therapy
- JVA (joint vibration analysis) to determine the health of the jaw joint by measuring the vibrations in the joint. A normal, healthy joint produces no vibrations. Unhealthy joints produce many vibrations detected by the JVA software.
- Cold Laser Therapy to assist in reducing inflammation, pain, and swelling associated with TMJ disorders.
- T-Scan to provide a digital bite analysis to quantify the timing and force of your teeth when they come together.