



HEALING JAW PAIN:

5 STEPS TO RELIEVE TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT (TMJ) PAIN

AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE TO RELIEVE YOUR
TMJ PAIN IN 5 EASY SETPS

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INTRODUCTION

THE PATH TO RELIEF

This book is for everyone suffering from head or neck pain, specifically pain from the jaw joints and muscles connected to the temporomandibular joint (TMJ). If you or someone you know experiences TMJ problems, you are not alone. Recent studies conducted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) reveal over 12 million people in the United States alone suffer pain in the temporomandibular joint.

Your temporomandibular joint is a vital part of your everyday life. It is the essential joint for eating, chewing and more. Disorders of the TMJ differ from person to person in terms of severity, the types of symptoms, and reasons for onset. Many powerful muscles of the head & neck, along with a network of nerves and ligaments contribute to the challenge of finding permanent solutions. Other conditions, such as teeth clenching, night grinding (Bruxism), or missing teeth can be a major cause of TMJ disorders. When you are out of alignment, you are more likely to experience pain.

Fortunately, new approaches and therapies are available to help most people overcome symptoms such as jaw clicking, limited opening, pain when chewing, headaches and chronic neck pain. We wrote this book to help you find relief, either for yourself or for someone you know who is in need.

- Dr. Pedro

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CHAPTER ONE

DIAGNOSING **TMJ DISORDERS**

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DIAGNOSING TMJ DISORDERS

The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is a very complex, sliding joint that connects your jawbone to your skull in the area just in front of your ears. A healthy joint is absent of pain, functions freely without noise (clicking sounds), and permits the wide opening of the mouth with easy lateral motion. When the TMJ becomes problematic, you may have any or all of the following signs or symptoms:

- Pain or tenderness in the joint area or face upon opening your mouth
- Pain when closing or biting
- Limited mouth opening range
- Difficulty chewing or pain while chewing
- Jaw locking
- Clicking, popping or grinding when opening or closing your mouth
- Headaches/Migraines
- Tinnitus or “ringing in the ears”
- Dizziness
- Tooth sensitivity
- Associated neck pain that can travel to the shoulders if left untreated
- Upper back pain

The correct and easier term for TMJ problems is TMD because everyone has the Joint, but a problem with that joint is called temporomandibular joint disorder, hence, TMD.

CHAPTER ONE

DIAGNOSING TMJ DISORDERS

Causes of TMD

- Trauma to the face or jaw
- Bruxism (unconscious /unintentional grinding of teeth, often at night)
- Chronic clenching
- Misaligned teeth
- Missing teeth
- Stress & Anxiety

Proper diagnosis is a key factor in determining the most effective treatment(s) for a TMJ disorder. Finding a specialist with an expert understanding of the anatomy and physiology of the temporomandibular joint is paramount. Many dentists have a baseline understanding of TMD. Finding a dentist who specializes in TMJ and has a variety of treatment solutions to offer TMJ sufferers is often a challenge. There are different options someone who truly specializes in TMJ can provide you

Treatment Options

- Splint Therapy
- Selective Enameloplasty (the removal of interfering tooth contacts)
- TENS therapy
- Radiofrequency therapy
- Botox (R)
- Stress Management therapy
- Corrective Dentistry (tooth replacement, orthodontics, prosthodontic therapy)

DIAGNOSING TMJ DISORDERS

Diagnosing TMD

TMD does not manifest in the same way for everyone. It expresses itself differently from person to person. Some people experience their pain most intensely in the morning, particularly if they tend to clench their jaw and/or grind their teeth at night. Some people suffer the most pain while eating and chewing “tougher” foods. Other people get into trouble when they yawn or open their mouths wider than their jaw is comfortable. The key to finding the proper solution for your particular situation is easier when an extensive and thorough examination is performed by a TMJ Specialist.

Before your TMJ Specialist diagnoses you, he or she needs to be aware of your history with specific details of your problem. You want them to ascertain as much information as possible as to what, where, how and when your TMD began and what causes flare ups. Is it an acute, first time issue? Is it a chronic, long-standing problem? Does the pain vary under certain conditions? The exam should capture detailed information such as the location of your pain, the degree to which you can comfortably open your mouth, the palpation of associated muscles along with a test of the joint proper, among other things. Dental X-rays may also prove helpful in the analysis, particularly with what’s called a CBCT Scan, (Cone-Beam Computed Tomography). This system rotates around the patient, capturing data using a cone-shaped X-Ray beam. This is the most complete imaging currently available and is a very expensive piece of equipment. A TMJ Specialist provides this digital imaging so you have a complete picture, so to speak, of your condition. Additionally, a complete and comprehensive exam helps formulate a clearer picture of the nature of YOUR specific version of TMD.

DIAGNOSING TMJ DISORDERS

Diagnosing TMD (Cont.)

Once this detailed examination is complete, recommendations can be made. You want this guidance to be based on a plan customized to your particular situation based on a scientific, evidence-based approach.

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CHAPTER TWO

**SHORT-TERM
SOLUTIONS**

CHAPTER TWO

SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS

Finding and treating the root cause for any disease is always the ultimate goal. Discovering why you have TMD and identifying what's causing the problem is important. If you have acute pain, there are immediate treatments available to employ that bring you short-term relief. Short-term solutions are very valuable. They offer you a break from the “chain of pain” you may have been living with. Some people find that the short-term solution is all they need to put a long-term end to their TMD problem.

There are several common short-term solutions for TMD.

STANDARD SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS FOR TMD

- Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDS)
- Warm compresses
- Ice Packs
- Massage Therapy

However, there are a few newer short-term solutions available to treat TMD. Your TMJ Specialist will be aware of these options and should have the resources to provide you access to these treatments as these are important interventions to make available for patients suffering with TMD.

SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS

MORE EFFECTIVE SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS

- Radio-Frequency devices (RF) are an excellent immediate solution for TMD. These high end handpieces provide a non-invasive approach yielding a specific band-width of energy delivered directly to the particular facial muscles (the masseter, temporalis, medial pterygoid, lateral pterygoid) affecting your TMJ. This promotes near immediate relief as it relaxes those muscles with a prescribed frequency of energy, removing the pain experienced in the TMJ. Viora-Sinclair's V-Form device is an example of a radio-frequency device that delivers fast relief for TMD sufferers. Ask your TMJ Specialist about their RF technology to ensure it has proper efficacy documentation.
- TENS, (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation) therapy units are predominately used for nerve-related pain conditions (acute and chronic). TENS machines send stimulating pulses across the skin and along nerve strands which blocks your perception of pain in the affected TMJ facial muscles.

SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS

MORE EFFECTIVE SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS

- NTI device (Nociceptive Trigeminal Inhibitor), a tension suppression system, also known as an anterior disclusion device which goes over your two front teeth. This simply means it prevents the clenching action in your jaw. No clenching mean less wear and tear to your teeth less jaw pain and fewer, less intense headaches and/or migraines.
- Occlusal Therapy is also referred to as a nightguard, bit guard or it splint. An occlusal guard is a removable appliance that fits over your upper or lower teeth. It also help prevent damage to your teeth that can be caused by grinding and clenching. A destructive oral habit also known as Bruxism.

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CHAPTER THREE

LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS

LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS

Some people find permanent TMD relief from the previously described short-term solutions for. However, when the problem persists, or when your initial, detailed exam reveals a more significant issue that is less likely to resolve itself without more intervention, you may need to take the next step in your treatment plan. Your exact type of TMD must be addressed based on your symptoms, conditions surrounding your TMJ, degree of damage of the joint, and several other factors as determined by your TMJ Specialist.

LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS FOR TMD

It is beyond the scope of this book to specify each treatment that falls under the category of Long-Term solution. The following list is provided to raise your awareness that there are many potential paths available to bring you long-term relief and perhaps permanently heal your TMD:

- Physiotherapy jaw exercises
- Radio Frequency Therapy (Also available by Dr. Pedro, RF Therapy for TMD Sufferers)
- Botox Therapy (Coming Soon, Dr. Pedro writes a detailed analysis of Botox used in TMD Treatments)
- Occlusal Equilibration of Teeth
- Occlusal Splint Therapy
- Prosthodontic Dentistry
- Surgery (As a last resort)

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CHAPTER FOUR

NEW APPROACHES TO TMD

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NEW APPROACHES TO TMD

TMD affects multiple structures of the head and neck area. Traditionally it is not a specialty of either a medical doctor or even most dentists. Most practitioners do not offer much help beyond suggesting a night-guard or an occlusal splint. Now in the modern era, more options are available to you. Today, with these newer options, you have a greater chance of finding relief from TMD.

Below is a typical example of the steps you might take to get long-term results thereby getting your life back, free of the pain, suffering and embarrassment caused by TMD.

STEPS TO GET YOUR LIFE BACK

Step 1: Do Your Homework. Go Online & Educate Yourself

Step 2: Find a TMD/TMJ Specialist (Often a Prosthodontist)

Step 3: Undergo a thoroughly comprehensive exam & evaluation that includes detailed imaging

Step 4: Have a Diagnosis & treatment plan drawn up for you and reviewed by a doctor

Step 5: Receive Immediate Relief With Short-Term Solutions Appropriate For Your Condition

Step 6: Follow up as necessary with long-term Solutions Customized for your situation

ARE YOU

READY TO GET YOUR LIFE BACK?

Click the button or visit aboutfacedentalmedspa.com to learn more about how Dr. Pedro and About Face Dental & Aesthetic Boutique can get rid of your TMD and TMD symptoms for good.

Get Rid Of My TMD

