

## TMJ-TMD

### Temporomandibular Disorder (TMD)

Millions of Americans suffer from chronic facial and neck pain as well as recurring headaches. In some cases, this pain is due to Temporomandibular Disorder, or TMD.

Your temporomandibular joints (TMJ) connect your lower jawbone to your skull. These joints get a lot of use throughout the day as you speak, chew, swallow, and yawn. Pain in and around these joints can be unpleasant and may even restrict movement.

#### Symptoms of TMD include:

Pain in the jaw area

Pain, ringing, or stuffiness in the ears

Frequent headaches or neck aches

Clicking or popping sound when the jaw moves

Swelling on the sides of the face

Muscle spasms in the jaw area

A change in the alignment of top and bottom teeth

Locked jaw or limited opening of the mouth

Should you notice any of these symptoms, let your doctor know. Your dentist can help indicate the presence of TMD and create an effective treatment just for you.

There are a few simple steps you can take at home or work to prevent TMD from becoming more severe, or to prevent it from occurring:

Relax your face — remember the rule: "Lips together, teeth apart"

Avoid grinding your teeth

Avoid constant gum chewing

Don't cradle the phone receiver between your head and shoulder — either use a headset or hold the receiver in your hand

Chew food evenly on both sides of your mouth

Do not sit with your chin rested on your hand

Practice good posture — keep your head up, back straight, and shoulders squared