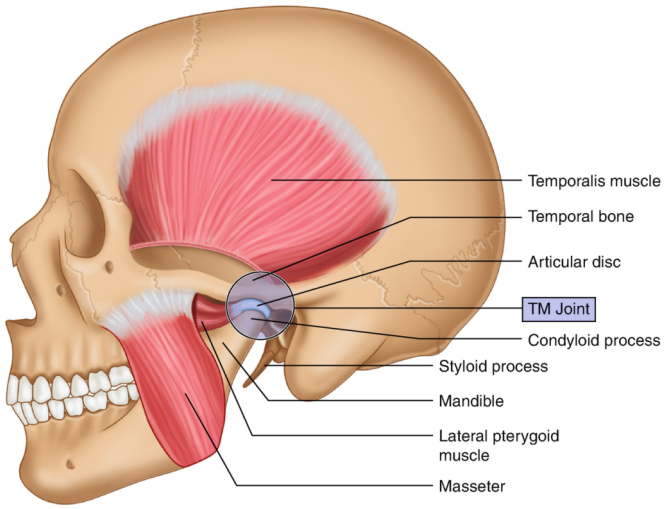
What Is Temporomandibular Joint Dysfunction (TMJD)?

Temporomandibular Joint Dysfunction (TMJD), also referred to as TMD, is a condition affecting the jaw joint and the muscles responsible for its movement. This complex joint connects your jawbone to your skull and plays a critical role in everyday functions like speaking, chewing, and yawning. When something goes wrong with this system—whether it's due to structural issues, muscle imbalances, or lifestyle stressors—it can lead to persistent discomfort or pain, often affecting your overall well-being.

What Exactly Is the TMJ?

The temporomandibular joint is located on each side of your head in front of your ears. It acts as a sliding hinge and is unique in that it allows both rotational and gliding motions. It's supported by muscles, ligaments, cartilage, and a small disc that absorbs shock and ensures smooth jaw movement.



What Is TMJ Dysfunction?

TMJ dysfunction refers to a broad group of disorders that impact the joint's normal function. This dysfunction may stem from the joint itself (intra-articular) or from the surrounding muscles and soft tissues (extra-articular). Some of the most common signs include:

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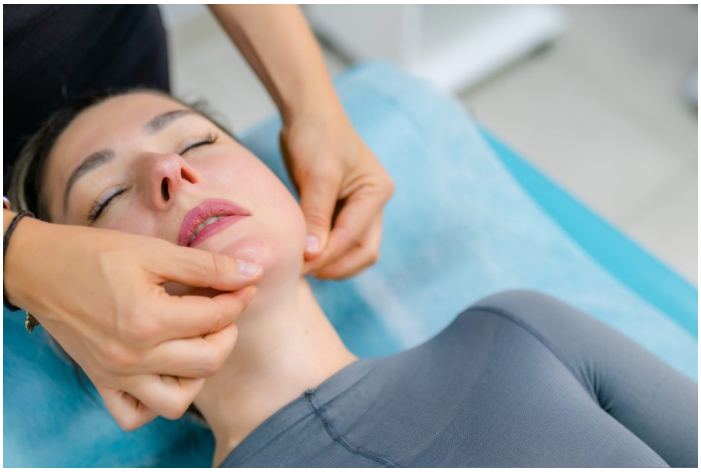
- Pain or tenderness in the jaw
- Clicking, popping, or grating sounds during jaw movement
- Limited jaw movement or locking
- Ear pain or ringing
- Headaches, especially around the temples
- Neck and shoulder discomfort

How Does TMJD Develop?

TMJD can be the result of many different factors or a combination of them. These include:

- Teeth grinding (bruxism)
- Clenching due to stress or anxiety
- Poor posture, especially head-forward posture
- Arthritis or joint degeneration
- Malalignment of the teeth or jaw
- Jaw injury or trauma

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Why Physiotherapy Is a Key Treatment Option

Many people don’t realise that some physiotherapists are trained to assess and treat TMJ disorders. A physiotherapy approach to TMJD includes:

- Manual therapy to improve joint mobility
- Myofascial release of tight facial and neck muscles
- Education and habit retraining (e.g., posture correction, clenching awareness)
- Targeted exercises to restore proper movement and muscle balance
- Dry needling or therapeutic ultrasound (where appropriate)

Early intervention is critical to prevent chronic pain and dysfunction. If you’re experiencing persistent jaw symptoms, getting assessed by a physiotherapist can put you on the path to recovery.

If you have been putting up with pain from your jaw, book an appointment with one of our specialist physios today to get a diagnosis and plan to get you back In Balance!

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