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## **TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT PAIN (TMJ)**

Temporomandibular joint syndrome is a complicated disease usually caused by muscle spasm around the jaw joint. These spasms are quite painful.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PAINS:**

1. Can come and go without warning.
2. Can last from seconds to hours.
3. Are not associated with hearing loss.
4. Are centered around the ear but can travel to the cheek, eye, forehead, neck or jaw.
5. Can be brought on by exposure to wind or cold air, stress, tension, chewing or clenching the teeth.
6. Can be associated with dizziness or ringing in the ears.

### **TREATMENT:**

Treatment is directed toward stopping the spasms around the jaw joint.

1. Rest the jaw as much as possible – Relax! DO NOT CLENCH!
2. Soft diet.
3. Do not open the mouth wide during yawning or chewing.
4. Correct dental problems (infected or missing teeth, poorly fitting dentures, malocclusions, etc...).
5. No gum chewing.
6. For pain:
  - a. Aspirin or Ibuprophen, 2 pills 3 times a day for five days, will help.
  - b. Application of heat to the area may help.
  - c. If the problem persists, muscle relaxants may be prescribed.
7. A check of your dentition and occlusion (how your teeth meet) by your dentist or oral surgeon is advised.