



**jaw  
disorders  
(TMJ)**

a **smile** is a curve that sets everything straight



# treatment methods

## **Occlusal appliance therapy (splint)**

Custom made by your dentist, they can help relieve pain.

## **Modified diet**

Eat only soft foods, avoid extreme jaw movements & limit opening the mouth.

## **Physiotherapy**

Exercises, massage and gentle movements (see at home exercises).

## **Medication**

Your dentist may prescribe anti-inflammatory medication.

## **Specialist management**

If pain is severe and conservative treatment has not been effective the dentist may refer the patient to a specialist.

## **Surgery**

Very rarely you may be referred to an oral surgeon if surgery is needed.

The jaw joint is also known as the 'temporomandibular joint', known for short as the 'TMJ'. It can be felt by placing your fingers just in front of your ears, and opening and closing your mouth. A TMJ disorder may affect one or both joints, often causing pain and limiting jaw function.

# Jaw joint disorders

## Most common causes are...

- Missing teeth
- Grinding or clenching of teeth, which may be linked to stress
- Emotional or physical stress, and tension in the jaw muscles

## Symptoms may include...

- Limited jaw movement
- Clicking, grating or popping noises from the jaw joints
- Pain when chewing, yawning or opening jaw widely
- Headaches
- Neck & shoulder pain
- Toothache





# at home exercises

1. Avoid biting on front teeth
2. Select soft food only, and using both sides of the mouth, chew using the back teeth only
3. Do the following exercise for two 5 minute periods each day

Sit in a comfortable chair in front of a mirror with the back teeth resting together, and relax. The tip of your tongue will be resting just behind your front teeth. Now slowly curl the tongue backwards so that you feel it running over the hard palate and then against the soft palate. Continue to push the tongue back as hard as you can, keeping it in contact with the soft palate, and then slowly open your mouth. Check in the mirror that you are opening vertically, and not deviating to one side. Most people find that the tip of the tongue is pulled away from the palate as the mouth is opened wide. Do not allow this to happen. Hold this position of conflict for five seconds, and then relax for five seconds and then repeat the exercise.

If your jaw clicks at any time during the exercise, this will mean that you are not doing it properly, and so start again from the beginning.

### **exercise continued...**

The purpose of the exercise is to pull the jaw backwards as hard as possible and relax the muscles which pull the jaw forward. This takes the strain off ligaments in the joints and allows them to heal. Initially, you may find that there is no improvement, and the pain may seem to get worse. Do not get discouraged. After the first week, do the exercise for many short periods each day and a slow but gradual improvement will follow.

## **our team**

Dr Jim Lazaredes **(BDSC) 1963**

Dr Graham Tegg **(BDSC) 1981**

Dr Sam Patel **(BDS) 1988**

Dr Jiten Rao **(BDS) 1990**

Mrs Michele Britton **Hygienist**

Ms Victoria Clark **Hygienist**



### Opening hours

Monday to Thursday 8am to 5pm  
Friday 8am to 4pm  
Closed for lunch 12.30pm to 1.30pm

### Contact Details

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### Location

**28 Paxton Street**  
**North Ward Q 4810**

### Urgent Treatment

**Phone 4772 4944**  
During working hours you will be assessed and a suitable appointment time will be arranged.

On Weekends & Public Holidays you will be directed to the ADA dental emergency service.

