



*Musculoskeletal*

## **The Temporomandibular joint: pain management and treatment**

### **A review on "the forgotten joint"**

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The term "Temporomandibular joint disorder" (TMD) is not a specific diagnosis, but rather a collective name for disorders of various anatomical structures (such as the masticatory muscles), disturbances in jaw movements etcetera.

Mental health is an important role in TMDs, and it is therefore an important factor to take into account when examining a patient presenting with a TMD. TMDs may provoke pain in different areas such as the ears, mouth/teeth, the forehead and the occiput.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate different treatment strategies and to compare these with each other. Treatment strategies such as exercise, splint therapy, massage therapy and manual therapy were included in this review.



Hypertrophy of the masseter muscle often causes tension type headache. Manual therapy and massage therapy aim to treat trigger points and/ or mobilise the

Temporomandibular joint (TMJ), especially when there is a disc displacement and the disorder involves sliding and gliding movements.

When a TMD goes accompanied by somatic symptoms like sleep disorders or chronic pain, there are other treatment options, like oral and injectable procedures. In severe cases, surgical procedures (such as disc releases) can be performed to reduce the inflammatory processes.

This review concluded that conservative treatment such as counselling, exercises, occlusal splints, massage and manual therapy are the best way to treat TMDs.

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