

# ARE YOU LIVING WITH JAW PAIN?

*TMJ Could Be  
The Culprit*

Healthy Recipe:  
Mediterranean  
Chicken Salad

Home Exercise  
for TMJ Pain

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Success Story

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# ARE YOU LIVING WITH JAW PAIN?

## *TMJ Could Be The Culprit*



**A MESSAGE FROM DR. CHRISTIAN, DPT**  
**TMJ PAIN**

Are you suffering from lingering pain on either or both sides of your jaw? Believe it or not, you're not alone! Millions of people in the United States alone suffer from an ailment known as TMJ (Temporomandibular Joint Disorder). TMJ is a disorder that causes significant jaw pain during chewing and speaking and affects any movement that involves opening and closing your jaw. TMJ can be due to several reasons. One of the most common types of TMJ involves a lack of space between what's called the Temporomandibular joint (that's the "hinge" part of your jaw). This can cause a painful feeling of fatigue and soreness at the side of your jaw, and can even

lead to headaches, neck pain, and locking of the jaw. Fortunately, Physical Therapy can help with TMJ pain. Research and years of practical application have found that manual therapy and soft tissue/joint mobilization can improve symptoms and relieve pain so that you can return to chewing, talking, and general daily activities pain-free. Once the symptoms are reduced, a skilled Physical Therapist can even prescribe safe and functional jaw exercises to ensure that the pain stays away for good! If you are tired of chronic pain, schedule an appointment for a full Physical Therapy evaluation at Joint Restoration Center today!

# ARE YOU LIVING WITH JAW PAIN? TMJ COULD BE THE CULPRIT

Do you suffer from headaches, grinding of your teeth, neck pain, clicking of your jaw, or even ear pain? You're not alone! These can all be signs of a condition known as Temporomandibular Joint Disorder (TMJ).

This is a disorder of the jaw muscles and nerves caused by injury to the TMJ (the temporomandibular joint), which is the joint between your jaw and skull. A physical therapist can take a look at your symptoms and help to diagnose you if this is what has been causing your discomfort!

If you're living with this condition, don't fret! The skilled physical therapists at Joint Restoration Center are here to help you find true pain relief once and for all.

## COMMON CAUSES OF TMJ DISORDER

According to ChoosePT, TMJ disorder is so common that it currently affects more than 10 million people in the United States. That's a lot! There are several reasons you may be experiencing symptoms of temporomandibular joint disorder.

Multiple factors contribute to the muscle tightness and dysfunction that characterize this condition. Most often, poor posture and neck alignment change the pull of the muscles that make your jaw move. This causes painful grinding and irritation of the temporomandibular joint.

When all of the joints, bones, and muscles are in the right positions, the body performs at its best. So if you're consistently demonstrating poor posture or slouched over in your chair all day, you may encounter some issues. When the spine is misaligned, it can cause your lower jaw to push forward and generate a poor bite, which is one of the main reasons for TMJ disorder.

Other causes may include:

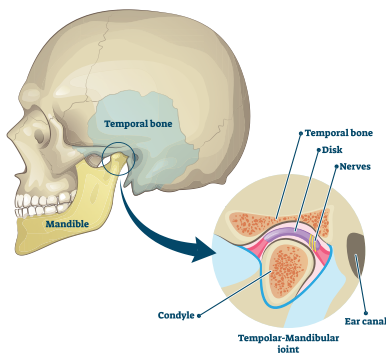
- Poor alignment of or trauma to the teeth or jaw (malocclusion)
- Clenching of the jaw (bruxism)
- Lockjaw (trismus)
- Teeth grinding
- Poor posture
- Stress
- Arthritis or other inflammatory musculoskeletal disorders
- Excessive gum chewing

When you see a physical therapist for pain relief for TMJ disorder, they may ask you questions about your daily life, including stressors and chronic conditions that could be causing your pain.

## SYMPTOMS OF TMJ

There are several ways to know if you may be dealing with TMJ, although the best way to find out for sure is to visit a Joint Restoration Center physical therapist.

When a person has TMJ, the injured joint leads to pain with chewing, clicking, and popping of the jaw, swelling on the sides of the face, nerve inflammation, headaches, tooth grinding, and sometimes dislocation of the temporomandibular joint.



If you have had neck pain for a while and are unsure of its origin, chances are it could be the result of TMJ. In fact, experts say that up to 70% of neck problems may be related to the temporomandibular joint.

Your jaw's biomechanics and range of motion will likely be helped by addressing your upper body posture. Your pain may be partially or completely relieved with the use of physical therapy. If you don't seek therapy, you could be putting yourself at risk for a dysfunctional cycle that spans the neck, shoulders, and jaw.

The bad news is that this condition can make everyday things such as talking and eating pretty uncomfortable. The good news is that a lot can be done to help TMJ disorder, first starting with a thorough evaluation of your problem with our expert physical therapists!

## HOW CAN A PHYSICAL THERAPIST HELP WITH TMJ?

At your first appointment with Joint Restoration Center, a thorough examination of your neck, shoulders, and thoracic spine will be performed to determine whether those structures are causing your symptoms.

Once the root cause of your problem has been discovered, a comprehensive plan can be developed to quickly relieve your pain and restore natural movement to your temporomandibular joint. Furthermore, our physical therapists will teach you techniques for regaining normal jaw movement for long-lasting results.

The focus of physical therapy for TMJ is relaxation, stretching, and releasing tight muscles and scar tissue. In most cases, physical therapy can resolve TMJ and prevent the need for surgery.

However, in cases where surgery is absolutely necessary, physical

therapy is a vital part of the recovery process, as it helps minimize scar tissue formation and muscle tightness and allows for a complete recovery.

Your recovery plan may involve various procedures and modalities, such as jaw exercises, soft tissue massage, joint mobilization, myofascial methods, electrical stimulation, and ultrasound. Your PT will also work with you on improving your posture as well since this can contribute to TMJ-related pain.

### GIVE US A CALL TODAY

If you're living with jaw or neck pain and discomfort, it's worth calling Joint Restoration Center to set up an appointment to assess your condition. On the chance that TMJ disorder is the culprit, our physical therapists will do everything in their power to give you the pain relief you deserve, and help you to experience less discomfort when you're talking, chewing, yawning, etc.

What are you waiting for? Relief is a call away — set up an appointment!

Sources: <https://www.choosept.com/symptomsconditionsdetail/physical-therapy-guide-to-temporomandibular-joint-disorder>

## Healthy Recipe!

### MEDITERRANEAN CHICKEN SALAD

- 1 cup lemon juice
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh mint
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh basil
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp honey
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 5 cups shredded romaine lettuce
- 2 cups diced cooked chicken
- 2 plum tomatoes, cut into wedges
- 1 (15 oz) can garbanzo beans
- 2 tbsp pitted chopped Kalamata olives plus 6 pitted whole
- 2 tbsp crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese

In a screw-top jar, combine lemon juice, mint, basil, olive oil, honey, and black pepper to make dressing. Close lid and shake well. Place lettuce on a large platter. Top with chicken, tomatoes, garbanzo beans, chopped olives, and feta cheese. Drizzle with dressing. Garnish individual servings with whole olives.



## HOME EXERCISE

### ISOMETRIC LATERAL PRESSURE *Helps with TMJ Pain*

Start by sitting up straight in a chair with your back straight and your head up. Slightly open your mouth so your teeth are parted and place your fingers on one side of your jaw. Press sideways on the bottom of your jaw but do not allow your jaw to move. Hold briefly and then repeat on the other side. Continue as directed by your provider. Repeat 3 sets, 5 reps, 5-second hold.

Not all exercises are appropriate for every person. Please consult with a healthcare provider before starting.



## Patient Success Story

**"The entire office is great. I get a reminder of appointments, am encouraged to ask questions, and a call about additional concerns. The PT is always spot-on to what my injury needs. I am pushed to go the extra steps or stretches, but never to have pain. If the injections are even felt slightly, Chelsie gives me more numbing meds. They agree with my beliefs — the body can't heal with pain. The entire team cares about the patient's well-being."**

— Connie B.



**We want to hear *YOUR* success story!**

Leave a review for our practice and help us connect with the community! Visit <https://lead.me/bd9lrm> or scan the QR code to leave us a Google review!



## Has Your Pain Returned?

**Call today to schedule an appointment!**

**918.205.2608**

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[JointRestorationCenter.com](http://JointRestorationCenter.com)

**DON'T IGNORE YOUR PAIN. COME BACK TO JRC!**