

A Massage Therapy Approach to

Jaw Pain

And

Dysfunction

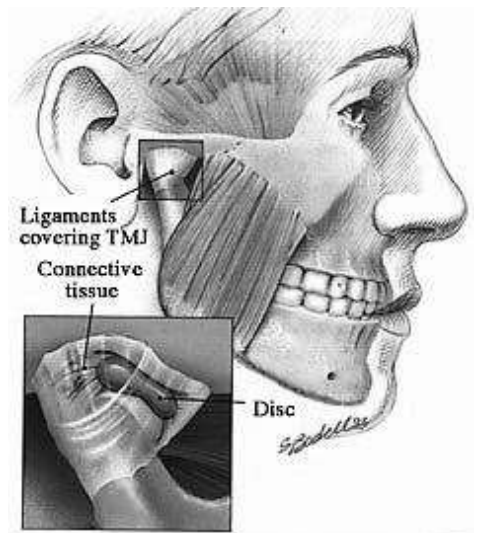
Diana Delisle

Registered Massage Therapist

Jaw Pain and Dysfunction

The jaw (or TMJ for **T**emporo **M**andibular **J**oint) is frequently unacknowledged as a source of pain in many head, neck, face, and vocal conditions. People who experience headaches, motor vehicle accidents, sport or work site injuries, often have jaw issues that can accumulate to overwhelming levels.

Clenching the teeth is a very common habit during sleep, while concentrating, or from stress. This often results in an accumulation of both *compressive forces* in the joints and *asymmetrical muscle tightness* which can lead to clicking, pain and ultimately joint damage.



Resolving the joint compression and muscular tightness can re-pattern the jaw mechanics and save pain and difficulties decades later.

Why do some jaw joints click?

The jaw is exceptional in that it operates as two separate joints bound together by one bone – the mandible. The muscles responsible for moving the joints work in tandem with how the teeth fit together (occlusion), along with the fit and movement of the cranial bones, creating a system of interrelated mechanics.

All is well when the jaw joints work within functional symmetry, but if one side begins to move differently many compensatory patterns can begin. These adaptive movements can be the beginning of a vicious cycle where some tissues are overworked and eventually become compromised.

A special friction-reducing disc exists inside the joint much like the discs in the spine. The disc maintains the appropriate amount of space in the joint, and moves forward and back in co-ordination with the opening and closing of the mouth. *Joint compression and muscle tightness often accumulate resulting in an abnormally forward disc position.* Then, as the jaw bone moves, the disc bunches up like a speed bump on the road, producing a click. If left untreated disc perforation can result, leaving the joint vulnerable to pain and arthritis.

Treatment involves working directly on the chewing muscles.

Accessing the chewing muscles involves working inside the mouth for 20 to 30 seconds at a time, alternating between right and left sides. Releasing muscle tightness and joint compression fosters mechanical symmetry, addresses pain, and can contribute to improving your bite.



Musicians and Speakers

Singers, brass and woodwind musicians as well as teachers, broadcasters and clergy will all know the value of good jaw mechanics. If there is stiffness, pain or joint clicking there is surely a reduction in air flow, vocal projection, resonance or embouchure stamina.

Restoring symmetrical function, resolving pain and joint restrictions can be extremely valuable both personally and professionally.

What to expect:

- *A series of 3 to 8 weekly treatments* is often required in an attempt to re-pattern the TMJ Dysfunction (TMJD), and/or laryngeal position. Treatment goals and criteria for detecting progress will be established so you may measure effectiveness.
- Longstanding issues can frequently be improved but not fully resolved. In these cases clients “graduate” after an initial series to monthly or seasonal visits of 2 treatments within a week to keep old patterns from recurring; feeling well for longer is the intent.
- The fee is \$90.00 per treatment (price includes HST).

Connecting the dots. . .

- ✓ Assessment begins with looking at the symmetry of mouth opening and closing, and habits of *clenching and/or grinding*. The health and function of the sinuses, ears, cranial bones, speech and breathing patterns, as well as dental history will all be considered. Pain is often reduced when the tightness in the chewing muscles is diminished or resolved.
- ✓ TMJ pain and dysfunction frequently involves a *vicious cycle* comprised of many primary and secondary components. The goal is to identify and separate the components so that they are no longer influencing each other.
- ✓ TMJ pain and dysfunction may be secondary to other conditions. Those who are troubled with *headaches* often have clenching and TMJ Dysfunction as a silent contributor. Many cases of *scoliosis* or *Low Back Pain* also present TMJ difficulties. *Motor vehicle accidents* and *sport injuries* often lay the foundation for TMJ issues. Massage Therapy's holistic approach and generously timed sessions will address these related issues as well.

Who is Diana Delisle? Registered Massage Therapist

Diana Delisle has been practicing Massage Therapy since 2008. She had been practicing with numerous chiropractors in the city of Ottawa over the years and opened Poised Massage Therapy in 2014.

Diana takes a holistic approach to massage therapy. She is a passionate therapist who strives to provide her clients with a natural approach to healing. Diana specializes in therapeutic treatments, deep tissue, prenatal, sports and relaxation massage. She also has additional training in TMJ (**T**emporo **M**andibular **J**oint) dysfunction (TMJ treatment and rehabilitation). She has integrated techniques specializing in rehabilitation from work related stress and injuries to low back pain, sprains, strains, headaches, muscle tension, tendonitis, and postural abnormalities.

Diana pursues a level of excellence in innovative applications and has recently groomed her practice toward TMJ cases.



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