The Toxic Effects of TMJD

“SLEEP APNEA WAS A CRITICAL ISSUE. I WAS HAVING INTERRUPTED BREATHING 23 TIMES EVERY HOUR.”

Sandra Smith

Over time, Sandra Smith, in her mid-fifties, became an expert on many aspects of pain.

“I had a long-term extreme headache issue that had been misdiagnosed as continuing migraines,” she recounts.

“Beyond this issue, I was being treated at TMJandSleep@gmail.com

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Aspects of pain. I was having headaches over 90 percent of the time. They were debilitating headaches, exacerbated by humidity, by barometric pressure, by things that I ate, by any kind of tension that I might experience in normal everyday living. I’m right now experiencing about 92 to 93 percent improvement. I literally have my life back after four years of super suffering.”

Health&Healing: Sandra Smith offers a remarkable testimony to your TMJD treatment plan.

DR. FERZLI: Her case is also a good example of the complex nature of TMJ and the importance of taking a holistic approach to treating it. And it also illustrates one of the most significant health issues today: inflammation.

We are living in a world that is dominated by poor health choices, a great deal of fast foods, with too many children growing up with poor diets. And we have more and more inflammation in the population of all ages and both genders. One result of this onslaught is that we see more patients complaining of jaw pain, headaches, and poor sleep. Inflammation affects breathing. When the airway tissue becomes inflamed it becomes narrower. As a result, there is more congestion from the nose and there is more mouth breathing and associated sleep problems.

A good deal of our treatment focuses on curbing inflammation: how to treat it with the oral appliance or the oral appliance alone, as well as decreasing inflammation in the body.

Patients come to us because they have TMJD. and how many aspects there are for treating this surgery and the continued use of my oral appliance or the oral appliance alone, as well as decreasing inflammation in the body.

Usually after menopause, males and females have an equal likelihood of having TMJ problems—and men will less often complain of having TMJ problems as adults. Women will more often be sensitive to the pain affecting the jaw joint.

Toxins are everywhere. And maintaining health in a toxic world is a real challenge for all of us. A lot of people don’t breathe through their nose, and it is the nose that filters the air you breathe. Too many people breathe through their mouth because they cannot breathe through their nose. And the mouth is not designed to filter the air we breathe—so we have tonsils as a first line of defense against pollutants.

Health&Healing: It seems when you are treating a TMJ problem that the oral appliance is just the beginning of the healing process.

DR. FERZLI: Yes, the oral appliance or the oral orthodontic is a prop to decrease inflammation from the joint and allow the patient to function with less joint compression and inflammation. So then the muscle in the area relaxes. The patient’s threshold for pain decreases. They feel less pain and over time, they get better. It is a complex process. For each patient, we need to address multiple issues: quality of sleep, their diet, appropriate movement. And much more. But properly done, it provides wonderful results.

At the TMJ & Sleep Therapy Centre of Raleigh-Durham, Dr. Ferzli, right here in Cary, was one of the most progressive and comprehensive experts in this field—the treatment of TMJ disorders.

“And so I made my first appointment with Dr. Ferzli on March 22nd of this year. And it was an incredible experience. It began with the completion of a huge round of extensive, detailed questionnaires—about my eating habits and my sleep habits and my pain issues, and a good deal more. Fairly early on in this process, Dr. Ferzli said ‘I think you have sleep apnea and I think that is contributing to this process.’”

“Right now, as I am nearing completion of my work with Dr. Ferzli, I feel I am 90 percent on the path of being completely well. When I first came to Dr. Ferzli, the opposite was true. I was having headaches over 90 percent of the time. They were debilitating headaches, exacerbated by humidity, by barometric pressure, by things that I ate, by any kind of tension that I might experience in normal everyday living. I’m right now experiencing about 92 to 93 percent improvement. I literally have my life back after four years of super suffering.”

Health&Healing: How do people control their TMJD? What are the most common complaints caused by or associated with TMJD? The most common complaints caused by or associated with TMJD are:

1. Jaw pain
2. Neck pain
3. Facial difficulty chewing
4. Clicking and locking
5. Headache

These symptoms are caused by inflammation in the TMJ, which can be exacerbated by poor diet, stress, and other factors. To control TMJD, patients should:

1. Eat a balanced diet
2. Practice good sleep hygiene
3. Manage stress

By addressing these factors, patients can improve their symptoms and quality of life. If you are experiencing symptoms of TMJD, it is important to consult with a healthcare professional for proper diagnosis and treatment. Original text published in Health & Healing in the Triangle, Vol. 21, No. 2, Health & Healing, Inc., Chapel Hill, NC, publishers. Reprinted with permission.

TMJ DISORDER: WHAT IS IT?

The temporomandibular joint is one of the most complex joints in the human body; it resides directly behind the ear, connecting your jawbone to your skull and acting like a sliding hinge. Any problem preventing this complex system of muscles, ligaments, discs and bones from working properly may result in painful TMJ disorder (TMJD), causing stress, swelling, and pain—not only in the jaw, but in many parts of the body. Symptoms of TMJD include jaw pain, difficulty chewing, clicking and locking of the jaw, and pain in the neck. TMJ disorder is the most common complaint caused by or related to TMJD.