TMD - Dental Headache
(temporal mandibular disorder/dental occlusive disorders)

The Problem:
• Asymmetry of bite or abnormality in the jaw joint cause chewing muscles to go into spasm
• Affected muscles can be located in the jaw, face, scalp or neck
• Painful sensations – especially when chronic – are felt in the scalp, eye, temples and forehead causing headache – not in the area where pain originally began

Common Symptoms:
• Change in bite when chewing – due to muscles contracting to prevent further injury (like limping when a leg is injured)
• Unrecognized muscle soreness – jaw muscles and neck muscles that don’t hurt spontaneously feel pain when pressed on
• Muscle spasms in jaw, face, scalp, or neck
• Referred pain is felt in scalp, ear, eye, and temple – usually on one side
• On occasion, one sided autonomic symptoms such as tearing or dry eye, facial blanching or flushing, blood shot eye, runny nose
What are TMD and Occlusive Disorders of Teeth?

Muscles used in chewing and opening and closing the jaw rely on tension in your neck and scalp muscles for forceful biting. Compare the power of biting when your head is held down compared to when your neck is extended. Disorders in bite, due to teeth malalignment or in the jaw joint, cause unequal muscle forces that also involve neck and scalp muscles – like carrying a heavy suitcase in one hand and a light suitcase in the other. When these muscles are sprained, pain may be felt in the face or jaw, or in the head, causing headache. Since you use your jaw and chewing muscles all day long, headache pain becomes chronic.

This kind of headache will not go away until problems with bite (dental occlusion problems) or temporal mandibular jaw joint are effectively treated. Most TMD symptoms come from muscle spasm. Only rarely is a primary joint problem like a slipped meniscus the root problem.

What can YOU do?

**Muscle Pain**
- Treat pain or spasm with warm compresses

**Anti-inflammatories**
- Use naproxen or ibuprofen

**Chewing**
- Avoid chewing hard or tough food and don’t chew gum
What your Healthcare Provider Can Do

Dental Evaluation
• Dental evaluation for TMJ or occlusive disorder
• Dental problems can be identified and specifically treated
• Oral Splints
• Help rebalance muscles used in chewing

Teeth Grinding
• Tense sleep can be reduced by using amitriptyline or selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors such as citalopram or other medicines which help muscles relax

Physical Therapy
• Ultrasound
• Range of motion and stretching exercises

Oral Surgeon
• Treat serious TMJ disorders using MRI imaging, anesthetic/steroid joint injections or Botox injections into masticatory muscles