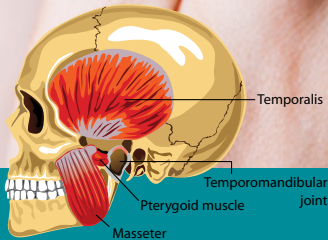


## TMJ

Temporomandibular jaw disorder, or TMJ, refers to the condition that prevents the normal function of your jaw joints. TMJ can be caused by bruxism, jaw damage, a bad bite, or high stress levels and result in such symptoms as headaches, clicking noises, neck and shoulder pain and tenderness in the jaw. Fortunately these common symptoms can be resolved with treatment.



## Treating TMJ

With a detailed examination and x-rays, your dentist will assess your TMJ disorder and its causes. With this clear understanding of your individual problem, a personal treatment plan is designed to help resolve your discomfort and pain.

It's important to treat TMJ early, as it can affect not only your dental health, but your general health and wellbeing too. With TMJ treatment your oral health will be improved, and you can look forward to a healthier, pain-free future.



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# BRUXISM & TMJ



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## Do you grind or clench your teeth?

If you suffer from headaches, tension in your neck and shoulders, clicking noises when you open your mouth, or tenderness in your jaw, what you might not realise is that these common symptoms may be caused by problems with your bite.

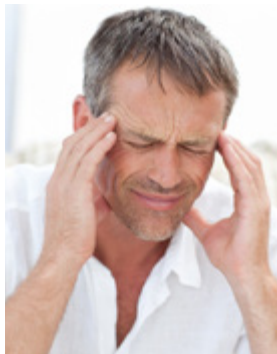
The simple act of opening and closing your mouth uses two joints and several muscles, working as a team to allow you to chew, swallow and speak. When something stops the smooth running of the muscles, discs and bones, a painful TMJ, temporomandibular joint, disorder can occur.

We can identify the underlying cause of your problems and prescribe an individual solution. That includes supplying solutions to problems which you may not even be aware you have, such as those that affect your teeth while you sleep.



### Headaches caused by teeth grinding

Bruxism, or excessive clenching and grinding of the teeth, is a common condition and can often be the underlying cause of headaches. Bruxism can be caused by several factors such as nutritional deficiencies, sleep disorders, stress levels or a misaligned bite, and because it often occurs as you sleep, you may not be aware of it.



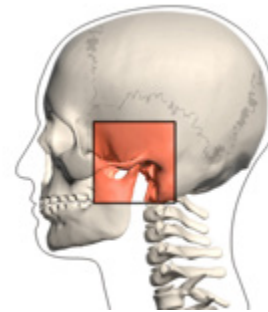
If left untreated, bruxism can lead to further problems such as excessive teeth wear, broken restorations, head and facial pain, clicking jaw joints, and temporomandibular jaw (TMJ) or facial muscle problems.

By examining and considering your individual situation, we can offer advice on the best method of treating your bruxism.

### Treating bruxism

After a consultation we will determine which course of action is best for treating your bruxism. Often, this treatment may be as simple as wearing a tailor-made bite splint. In other cases, if you've suffered from bruxism for some time, you may have overly worn teeth that need to be rebuilt, or a misaligned bite requiring realignment.

To manage your bruxism, we may recommend methods such as decreasing your stress levels as much as possible. By making a conscious effort to relax, you may find you can stop clenching and grinding your teeth. We may also need to repair any worn teeth to protect the softer inner structure of your tooth called dentine, which wears much faster than the hard outer enamel and can be sensitive when exposed.



Lastly, by providing you with a custom-made preventative bite splint, we can help protect your teeth from the incredible force of night-time grinding.

### Managing teeth wear

A good option for preventing excessive teeth wear is a custom-made bite splint (also known as an occlusal splint). Fitted perfectly to your mouth, your bite splint will be comfortable to wear, fitting snugly and enabling you to speak and breathe as normal.

A bite splint eases the effects of bruxism by working to subtly reposition your musculature, which is sometimes enough to prevent grinding from occurring. The splint will also protect your teeth and restorations from the huge pressures of grinding when worn as you sleep every night.

Your splint is crafted from detailed upper and lower impressions of your teeth, constructed in a dental laboratory and fitted one or two weeks later at our practice.