

Temporomandibular disorders and occlusion. How and when they interact

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The Temporomandibular Disorders (TMD) include the intracapsular disorders of the TMJ and/or the disorders of the masticatory muscles. Occlusion was considered to be the most contributing factor in TMD symptoms. However, today most researchers agree that occlusal discrepancies play little to no role in TMD. Many occlusal parameters that traditionally the profession would indicate as the main etiological factor to the development of pain and dysfunction, today it is known that they contribute only minor.

The TMJs and occlusion are in constant correlation as part of the stomatognathic system. When the TMJ are in centric relation or musculoskeletal stable position and at the same time the occlusion is stable in maximum intercuspation, the orthopedic stability of the stomatognathic system is present.

The orthopedic stability is not always present in the normal population. That means that often the dental patients present with occlusal discrepancies without at the same time having any history of TMD signs and symptoms. But when a patient presents with TMD symptomatology and also has a type of large occlusal discrepancy that leads to orthopedic instability of the stomatognathic system, the treating dentist has to be cautious. There is a need to check if this orthopedic instability is also the etiologic factor of the patient's pain and dysfunction symptoms. If this is the fact the dentist has to address also the occlusal discrepancy in order to provide a stable relationship between the dental arches.

This presentation will focus on cases where TMD symptoms are caused due to orthopedic instability of the stomatognathic system. Emphasis will be placed on the diagnostic part and how the clinician can do the differential diagnosis and on the treatment plan. Once the TMD symptoms are treated with conservative methods it is of equal importance for the longevity of the pain relief to address the orthopedic instability.

Biography

Iliia Roussou received her dental degree from University of Athens Dental School. She completed her graduated studies in Prosthodontics at Temple University, PA, USA and in Orofacial Pain at University of Kentucky, Ky, USA. She completed her Ph.D. at University of Athens in 2005. She is a lecturer at the department of Prosthodontics at the same University since 2008. She maintains a private practice in Athens Greece, limited to Prosthodontics and Orofacial Pain.

Dr. Roussou has lectured as an invited speaker on topics of Orofacial Pain and Prosthodontics at dental meetings in Greece but also in Jordan, Sweden, Ireland, Switzerland, Slovenia, Lithuania, Russia, Lebanon, Cyprus and Bulgaria. She has also published numerous articles on the above mentioned topics.

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