Neuromuscular Dentistry

Neuromuscular Dentistry is the art and science of restoring harmony between the teeth, facial muscles, and temporomandibular joints (TMJ). The TMJ is the joint where your jaw connects to your skull, and when it is out of balance, the impact can go far beyond your mouth. Neuromuscular dentistry has grown through more than thirty years of research and clinical experience. Now Neuromuscular Dentists can use scientific measurements to diagnose and treat TMJ dysfunction by restoring balance. The result is improved function, reduced pain, and often a reduction of related symptoms like headaches, neck pain, and back pain.

What is Neuromuscular Dentistry?

Traditional dentists concern themselves with only the teeth and joints. They largely ignore the relationship of these structures to the nerves and muscles. Neuromuscular dentistry takes a complete view of the mouth system and how dysfunction can have significant impact throughout the body, from body posture to pinched nerves. To find the proper rest position for your jaw, a neuromuscular dentist will measure muscle function scientifically and compare it to your jaw’s motion and position. Traditional dentists sometimes attempted this type of treatment, but without the ability to scientifically measure jaw position and muscle activity, success rates were low. Neuromuscular dentists have the training and the tools to get accurate measurements for predictable treatment and high rates of success.

Who needs Neuromuscular Dentistry?

Neuromuscular dentistry can help if you suffer from any of the following symptoms:

- Headaches
- Facial pain
- Neck and shoulder pain
• Jaw pain
• Ear congestion
• Ringing in the ears
• Worn, chipping or cracked teeth
• Cracking or chipping dental restorations
• Loose teeth
• Clenching or bruxing
• Clicking or popping in the joints
• Limited jaw movement
• Tingling in the fingers

You may have talked to a doctor about your symptoms, but not gotten relief. Many doctors do not know that the above symptoms may indicate a lack of harmony between the joint, muscles, and nerves in the jaw.

**How are these problems treated?**

The first goal of treatment is to relax your muscles, which can relieve many of your symptoms. Low frequency Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS), a kind of electric massage, is used to relieve tension in your jaw so we can evaluate your jaw’s movement and find its ideal position. Once your jaw muscles are relaxed, we utilize computerized jaw tracking to determine whether your jaw is moving smoothly or if it is obstructed. Electromyography (EMG) allows us to accurately measure the muscles’ comfort, and find a bite position that puts your muscles at maximum rest. We will listen to the action of your joint with sonography to determine if there are degenerative joint and disc processes at work.

The science of neuromuscular dentistry is backed by clinical studies and numerous successful treatments. We use objective data to develop a comprehensive, individualized, and precise treatment plan that can provide both short-term relief and long-term reduction or elimination of symptoms, including chronic headaches, even migraines.

TMJ problems may take years to develop. They are chronic and degenerative and may worsen with time. With today’s technology, we can help many people who were previously unable to find relief.