

TMJ MANAGEMENT

- 1. ASSESSING PAIN DURING ORTHODONTICS:** Orthodontic treatment typically produces a dull, aching pain to the teeth and the bone surrounding the teeth. It is normal for this to last 4 - 5 days following the placement of orthodontic brackets and bands. A dull, aching pain or a sharp, shooting pain to the joints or muscles for an unknown reason is not normal and should be discussed with our staff.
- 2. NOISES IN THE JOINT:** Noises in the joint, pain upon chewing, limited opening or closing, or locking of the joint in either an opened or closed position, should be reported to our staff as soon as you notice any of these symptoms. There can sometimes be noises to the joint, which will create no ongoing problem. However, a joint that has been previously without symptoms and suddenly begins to have these problems, needs to be evaluated at our office.
- 3. MANAGEMENT OF TMJ/TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT PAIN:** When a joint or the muscles of the face become painful, it is necessary to rest them to allow time for healing to occur. Diet should be modified to a **soft diet only** for 4 - 6 weeks. Any food which requires excessive chewing or excessive force should not be eaten. This would include gum (bubble or regular), bagels, large hoagies or sandwiches, salads, steak, or any meat that requires much force to chew. An alternative diet could include foods like eggs, soups, pastas, and fresh fruits. The medication of choice for management of TMJ pain is a nonsteroidal, anti-inflammatory medication such as Motrin, Advil or Anaprox. Typically 400 mg every six hours should give relief of the pain. These medications should be taken for 10 days - 2 weeks until the pain is less severe.
- 4. RESTING THE JOINT:** Resting the joint is the most important aspect in allowing time for healing. If you return to a normal diet too soon, you can cause the joint to revert back to being painful and problematic. Therefore, adequate time is required to obtain a healthier joint.

PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS
301-733-5230