

THE LONDON Lingual Orthodontic CLINIC

A pain in the..... jaw?

Very few of us ever give thought to our jaw joint, otherwise known as the temporomandibular joint (TMJ). Most of the time it just works, allowing us to do the essential and the enjoyable things in life, such as eat, laugh and talk.

It is only when the joint becomes problematic that we become aware of how important it is. A jaw joint which goes out of alignment can cause aches and pains in the head and neck and the patient can also develop a clicky jaw. When the TMJ develops problems, it is known as temporomandibular dysfunction (TMD).

Sometimes, orthodontic treatment can bring about an improvement in TMD. If you are considering orthodontic treatment, it's very important that you tell the orthodontist you are suffering with TMD-related aches and pains. For instance, new patients at the London Lingual Orthodontic Clinic, will be asked by principal orthodontist Asif Chatoo to go through a detailed medical history designed to uncover any jaw issues.

Said Dr Chatoo: "I will always ask patients if they grind or if they have been told they are clenching their teeth. This can often be a sign that the jaw joint is being placed under stress. This should be taken into account before treatment begins."

An examination is also carried out. "More than anything," he says, "it's a question of examining the bite and working out how well it is working. If there is a problem, the

first step before starting orthodontic treatment is to get the jaw joint in the right position before starting treatment.”

“If there are difficulties, I will work with your dentist and you may be provided with a mouthguard-style splint to wear on your upper teeth and bring about a slight repositioning. This will help stabilise the jaw which should make it more comfortable.”

If this works, the orthodontic treatment is planned so that your teeth are moved into this new position. As a result of this teamwork between dentist and orthodontist, the outcome of the orthodontic treatment will not just be a straighter smile a more comfortable jaw joint and an improved bite.

If you enjoy eating, talking and laughing – and who doesn't? – then it is essential to be free from TMD and to have a comfortable bite. Which is why orthodontists can improve your health and wellbeing.

**For more information about the London Lingual Orthodontic Clinic,
call 0207 486 2883 or email admin@londonlingualbraces.com**