



TMJ News Bites

Issue 1 2022

From our Readers

We received a number of comments following our [2022 Special Issue of News Bites](#). Norine's email to us eloquently and concisely sums up a TMJers' life. Her message is one reflective of every patient's email we received.

"Thank you so much for this encouraging article. No one can truly relate to the suffering and impact this condition causes. It's often a lonely and silent journey where one "appears" to look normal but inside there is a tsunami of pain and chaos penetrating throughout the face and body, although we "appear" to look normal. It is torture without any aggravation. All one can do is brace yourself and exist around the internal torture. Imagine your face feeling like it's on fire (inside) throughout the day, with no relief, until it decides when it wants to subside. TMD has its own agenda and time-frame...the recipient has no escape. **I pray and hope that someday there will be a cure or definitive answer for treatment.** Until then we suffer and often in silence with recognition that no one will truly understand the distress and suffering, unless and if unfortunately, they live with it, as well. God Bless," Norine

We received messages from dental professionals, two of them told us about their success in treating TMJ, but Dr. Richard Ohrbach sent us compliments on the accuracy of our portrayal of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) Concept.

"The below is an outstanding summary of the NIDCR Council public meeting in January. I believe you captured the best and most pertinent of what was presented. It has been a long journey since January 2019, when we convened at the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) building for the initial NASEM TMD committee meeting and laid out the challenge for what needed to be addressed. To my mind, the NASEM TMD Report is an exceptionally good and accurate statement of the problem, and your summary below very nicely captures the impact that the Report has had on the relevant NIH-level

Thoughts from a Vitek Patient

I recently read an article in the *Sept 2021 issue of Journal of Pain Research* about the Vitek disc replacement (otherwise known as Proplast-Teflon Interpositional Implants). From here, on, I will call them the Vitek disc or disc replacement.

The article, [*Persistent Pain Following Proplast-Teflon Implants of the Temporomandibular Joint: A Case Report and 35-Year Management Perspective*](#), was a case study about a patient who received bilateral Vitek discs in her early 20s. She has since endured multiple surgeries, several invasive procedures, some for just two hours of relief. She suffered from depression and suicidal ideation as well. The woman in the case study has suffered terribly as a result of her decision to trust the doctors who likely told her it was a simple procedure and her pain would be gone with that single surgery.

How do I know this? Because I could just as easily have been the patient in the case study. Our histories are very similar, even if the initial cause for seeking treatment was slightly different. It couldn't have come at a worse time. I was a recent college grad with a degree in journalism. I didn't know it at the time, but it soon became clear that a career in journalism was the first of many dreams I would have to surrender along my TMJ journey. My descent into TMJ hell began in a physical therapist's office where I was being treated for severe neck pain and headaches. She worked with me for a few weeks before declaring whatever was causing my pain must be systemic, and her two strongest guesses were lupus or a TMJ disorder.

I got an appointment with the oral and maxillofacial surgeon (OMFS) before anyone else, so I started there. After a brief conversation with the doctor, he was quite convinced my problems were due to the TM disc being out of place. He ordered a special test (this was 1986 - things like CAT Scans and MRI's were not readily available at the time). The OMFS injected dye into both joints while the radiologist took some sort of scan called an arthrogram. Based on that one test, the surgeon said I needed an operation sooner rather than later. You see, when he injected the dye on the left side, it flowed throughout the joint. On the right side, however, the dye didn't go anywhere, a sign the doctor said meant the disc was displaced and preventing me from opening my mouth properly. Having had a few surgeries elsewhere in the body that were lifesaving, I went into it with a sense of trust and "he's the doctor; he wouldn't recommend it if I didn't need it"—or would he?

Within a month, my pain was back and at a higher level than before the surgery. I went to see the surgeon who then sent me to another doctor to have a splint fitted so I wouldn't grind my teeth at night. He also sent me for psychotherapy, because he felt I was simply an over-stressed young mother and if I could calm down, the pain would go away. He couldn't have been more wrong. [Click here to read more](#)

Watch Tricia's presentation at the National Academy of Medicine Study on TMJ as she shares her TMJ experiences, including that of the Vitek implant.



We are including a link to our 1994 Spring/Summer issue of TMJ Report in which we published an article on what we were hearing from the implant patients. ([See pages 5-7 of the 1994 TMJ Report Spring/Summer issue](#))

Analysis of Prosthetic Joint Infection Following Invasive Dental Procedure

[Martin H. Thornhill, MBBS, BDS, PhD^{1,2}](#); [Annabel Crum, BSc³](#); [Saleema Rex, BA, MSc³](#); [et al Tony Stone, BSc³](#); [Richard Campbell, MPH³](#); [Mike Bradburn, MSc³](#); [Veronica Fibisan, PhD³](#); [Peter B. Lockhart, DDS²](#); [Bryan Springer, MD⁴](#); [Larry M. Baddour, MD⁵](#); [Jon Nicholl, DSc³](#)
[JAMA Network Open. 2022;5\(1\):e2142987.doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.42987](#)

Key Points

Question: Is there an association between invasive dental procedures (IDP) and late prosthetic joint infections (LPJI) in patients who did not receive antibiotic prophylaxis prior to IDP?

Findings

This cohort study of 9427 LPJI hospital admissions for which dental records were available from 15 months preceding admission found no evidence of a temporal association between IDP and LPJI.

Meaning

These findings refute recommendations to give antibiotic prophylaxis to patients with prosthetic joints prior to IDP, given the cost, adverse drug reaction risk, and potential for promoting antibiotic resistance associated with antibiotic prophylaxis.

Abstract

Importance: Dentists in the United States are under pressure from orthopedic surgeons and their patients with prosthetic joints to provide antibiotic prophylaxis before invasive dental procedures (IDP) to reduce the risk of late prosthetic joint infection (LPJI). This has been a common practice for decades, despite a lack of evidence for an association between IDP and LPJI, a lack of evidence of antibiotic prophylaxis efficacy, cost of providing antibiotic prophylaxis, and risk of both adverse drug reactions and the potential for

promoting antibiotic resistance.

TMJ Concepts Acquired by Stryker, Corp.

TMJ Concepts was acquired by Stryker early last year. According to their website it states TMJ Concepts will remain in Ventura, CA and The TMJ Concepts staff and management team will remain in place.

Dave Samson, the former President of TMJ Concepts, has retired and is no longer with the company. The TMJA has learned TMJ Concepts staff are no longer allowed to communicate directly with TMJ patients and that patients now need to direct their concerns to their surgeons.

Educating the Medical Community and Public about TMJ Disorders

"Many areas of medicine, dentistry, nursing, behavioral health, physical therapy, and integrative health, as well as other health fields, contribute to TMD research and the care of individuals with a TMD. Going beyond traditional silos and bridging the gaps between professions will be the key to making progress, as will be education and training for those individuals in TMD research and care." (2020 NASEM report on TMJ)

The TMJ Association is dedicated to educating various medical communities about TMJ disorders and their complexity. Your TMJA recently was invited to present at two webinar events.

American Medical Women's Association organized a Sex and Gender Health Education event, November, 12-14, 2021. Terrie Cowley from the TMJA participated in a Q&A session along with other patient advocates. She was invited to give a brief talk on TMJ as most physicians do not have much knowledge of this condition. [Click here to read a brief summary of Terrie's presentation.](#)

Facial Pain Association held an online conference, January 29-30, 2022 and invited the TMJA to present. We invite you to view the video presentations by Terrie Cowley on the [TMJ Association](#) and Christin Veasley on [TMJ disorders](#).

TMJ Biomedical Research Grant Awarded

Dr. Hai Yao is a long-time supporter of the efforts of the TMJA and we congratulate him on receiving this NIH grant award!

"Researchers will study temporomandibular joint (TMJ) function, how the TMJ functions in different craniofacial developmental disorders that seem to put the joint at risk for degeneration and how the joint responds to surgical correction of these disorders, researchers said."

"Özlem Yilmaz, chair of the Department of Oral Health Sciences at Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), said the new project presents an

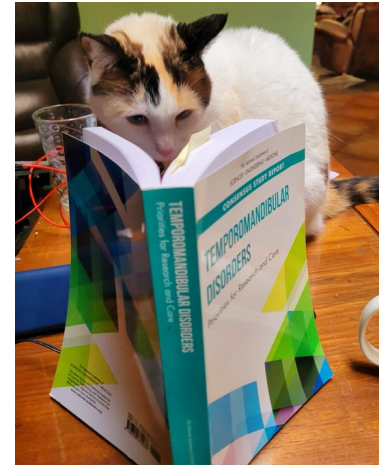
important venue to help patients debilitated with TMJ disorders and underpins South Carolina's leading position in temporomandibular disorders research."

"This grant is a testament to the strength of the biomedical research enterprise that Clemson and MUSC are building in partnership with federal collaborators, especially the National Institutes of Health," she said. "Dr. Yao's leadership has been crucial to the partnership's success, and it remains in good hands with him at the helm."

[Click here to read the full article.](#)

Meet Snowy, the TMJ AdvoCAT!

Hi, my name is Snowy. I am a cat with a mission and of course, I am also a queen. I've been begging my mom to let me play an active role in the TMJA. I've attended a number of Zoom calls with the TMJ Patient-led RoundTable and others. I have read the entire 409 pages of the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Report on TMJ. Finally! A month ago, I received word from the TMJA Top Cat (TC) that I was given an official role to help spread the word about TMJ disorders.



My Twitter account is [Snowy the TMJ AdvoCAT](#) and I'm off to a meowing start, however I need your help in getting my message out to the human race. Please follow me on Twitter <https://twitter.com/TMJAdvoCAT> and be sure to tell all your friends too!

Join Us and Take Action!

There is power in numbers and your voice matters! There are many ways you can participate – as a large vocal community, we can accomplish so much more when we join forces and take action together!

Register with the TMJA

We have had much success with policy decision-makers, but we can only imagine how much more powerful we will be working together. When we visit elected officials to advocate for patients' needs, we are often asked how many patients we have heard from in that official's state. By simply [registering your information with us](#), you will help us to continue to advocate for your needs as well as:

- Notify you of an opportunity to participate in patient surveys and clinical studies
- Notify you of opportunities to provide your TMJ testimony in writing or at public meetings
- Invite you to join in activities such as the [Patient-Led RoundTable project](#)
- Provide you with the information to advocate for TMJ patient needs by writing or calling your elected officials
- Receive our free e-newsletter, *TMJ News Bites*, to stay informed of

current activities and TMJ news.

Submit Your TMJ Story

[Sharing your story](#) is empowering and goes a long way in supporting others suffering with TMJ disorders, as well as educating the public about the real-life challenges of living with a TMJ disorder. Consider submitting your story and experiences with us through email (info@tmj.org) or upload a short video clip.

Make a Financial Contribution

Your financial support is vital and makes all of our work possible. We rely on individual donations as our main source of funding. [Please consider a donation today!](#)

Volunteer Your Expertise

If you have expertise in areas such as: fundraising, marketing, patient support, social media, scientific research and would like to volunteer some of your time to the TMJA, please contact us (info@tmj.org). Let us know what your interests are and we will be thrilled to match your skills with our needs.

Educate Others

Educating dental and medical professionals, family members, friends, co-workers and others about the prevalence and impact of TMJ by downloading and sharing our [brochures and other important resources](#).

New NIH Research Grant Opportunities

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Research on the Health of Women of Understudied, Underrepresented and Underreported (U3) Populations (Admin Supp Clinical Trial Optional)

The TMJA welcomes the announcement by the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health of the availability of Administrative Supplements to support research on the health of women in understudied, underrepresented, and underreported populations in biomedical research. The prevalence of TM disorders is higher in women and yet support for biomedical research specifically targeted to sex and gender topics in TMJ is lacking. Clearly, more research is needed to address molecular, genetic, musculoskeletal, endocrine, neurological, and bio-behavioral aspects of TM disorders in women. We hope this announcement will result in many new avenues of research that will clarify the causes of TMDs, elucidate the arc of disease progression, and ultimately, hasten the development of precision treatments for TMJ patients.

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-22-031.html>

About The TMJ Association...*Changing the Face of TMJ*

The TMJ Association, Ltd. is a nonprofit, patient advocacy organization whose mission is to improve the quality of health care and lives of everyone affected by Temporomandibular Disorders (TMJ). For over 30 years, we have shared reliable information on TMJ with people like you. We invite you to visit our

website, www.tmj.org.



The TMJ Association, Ltd., P.O. Box 26770, Milwaukee, WI 53226

info@tmj.org | www.tmj.org

The TMJ Association, Ltd. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

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