



# TMJ Disorders and Tinnitus

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## Signs and Symptoms of a TMJ Disorder

- Clicking, popping, or grinding noises in the joints
- Pain or discomfort when chewing, talking, or yawning
- Feeling that your jaw wants to “stick” or lock
- Frequent headaches, especially in the temple area
- Detecting a change in your bite



## Signs and Symptoms of a TMJ Disorder

- Soreness in or around the joint when you touch or lightly press it
- Ear discomfort, stuffiness, or tinnitus

The TM joint is a sliding "ball and socket" joint, whose parts work smoothly when you open and close your mouth.

Muscles surrounding the joint control its position and allow your mouth to open and close.

Your bite is more likely to be stable when the muscles and joints work together properly.

### Inside the TM Joint

The disk is a "shock absorber" that provides gliding action between your lower and upper jaw when you open and close your mouth.

Connective Tissue attaches your disk to the back of your joint and contains blood vessels and nerves.



The Condyle is the round end ("the ball") of the mandible, which moves in and out of your TM socket (fossa).

Muscles attached directly to the jaw bones help control movement and position.

Ligaments hold your disk to the jawbones and condyle, helping to stabilize the joint.



## How Does the TMJ Affect Tinnitus Three Theories

1. Chewing muscles are near some of the middle ear muscles and may affect hearing and tinnitus
2. There can be a direct connection between the ligaments that attach to the jaw and one of the hearing bones located in the middle ear
3. The nerve supply from the TMJ has been shown to have connections with the parts of the brain that are involved with hearing and the interpretation of sound



How Likely is it that Your Tinnitus is Related  
to TMJ Dysfunction?

Does the frequency, intensity, or tone change when  
you move your jaw or squeeze your teeth together?

Do you have other signs or symptoms of TMJ  
disorder?



## Treatments

- Medications/injections
- Electric modalities
- Avoiding triggers (bad posture, avoid crunchy, or chewy foods)
- Splint therapy