

Jaw health

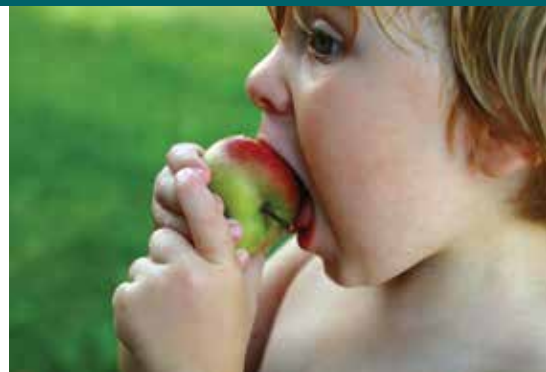
104 Piper Street
Bathurst NSW 2795

Telephone 6331 3364

info@bowmandental.com.au

www.bowmandental.com.au

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D E N T A L



Why is jaw health important?

A healthy jaw lets you enjoy talking, chewing and yawning.

The jaw consists of the jaw bone and the jaw joints, also known as the 'temporomandibular joint', found on both sides of the jawbone. When referring to jaw health we are talking about the jaw bone, its supporting muscles and the jaw joints.

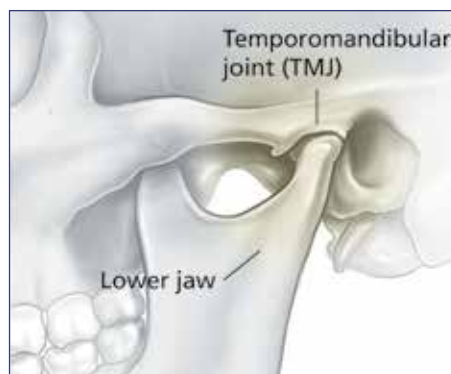
Disorders that impact on jaw function can have a significant flow-on effect on nutrition and general wellbeing, as the symptoms such as pain and jaw mobility impact on the sufferer's ability to chew food.

What causes poor jaw health?

Some of the causes of jaw joint disorders include:

- missing teeth
- excessive grinding or clenching teeth (bruxism)
- tension in the jaw muscles
- trauma or injuries such as fractures or dislocations
- osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and other degenerative diseases.

If you have limited jaw movement, clicking, grating or popping noises from your jaw joints or pain when moving the jaw; headaches, earaches, toothache, back or neck pain, you may be exhibiting symptoms of a jaw joint disorder and should consult your dentist for advice.



Bruxism may affect the temporomandibular joint, causing significant discomfort or pain.

Can poor jaw health be treated?

Jaw joint disorders are generally treated with considerable caution in order to minimise the permanent effect on the jaw and teeth. Some of the more common treatments dentists may suggest include: occlusal splints (night guards) to take the pressure off the jaw joints and teeth; modifying the diet to minimise chewing and rest the jaw; physiotherapy to reduce pain and stiffness; relaxation and stress management; and medication and behaviour modification.

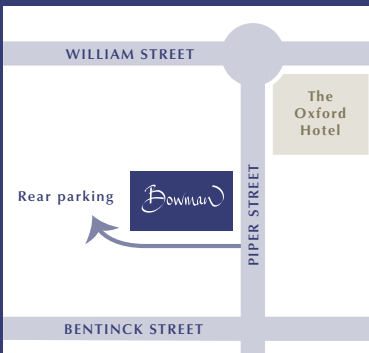


This card is designed purely as an introduction to jaw health. It is not intended to replace advice from a dental professional.

If you have any questions please feel free to talk to us in person.

We also have pamphlets containing more detailed information on this subject.

Kathy & team



Information courtesy of Australian Dental Association Inc. and Mi-tec Media. Medical image courtesy of Mi-tec Media.