Challenges with TMD Therapy from a General Dentist's Perspective

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Main Points

- Interprofessional Relationships in Rural Communities
- Denture Patients and TMD
- Confusion of "TMD" Definition
- Underutilization of DC/TMD

Interprofessional Relationships in a Rural Community

Misdiagnosis

- "My doctor told me I have TMJ and to get a mouthguard."
- "I get migraines all the time. The nurse practitioner gave me Topamax, but it doesn't really do anything. Then, my doctor told me to take a Maxalt that he prescribed, but when should I take it?"
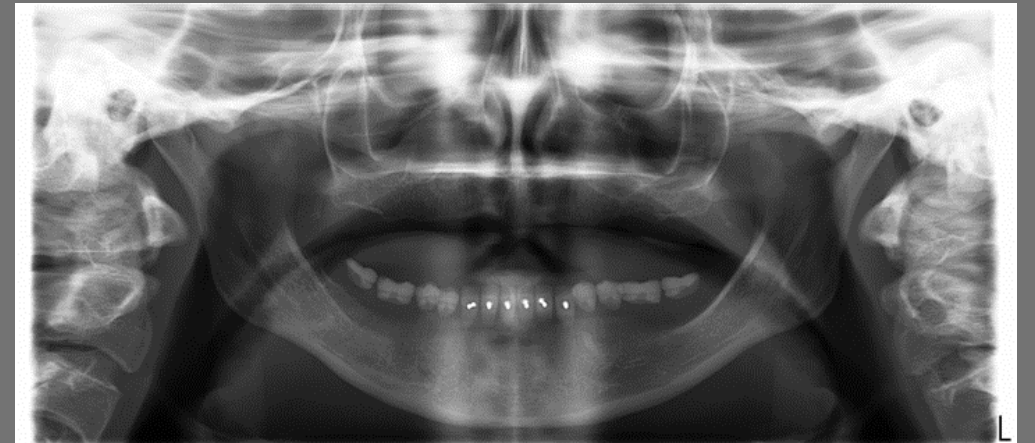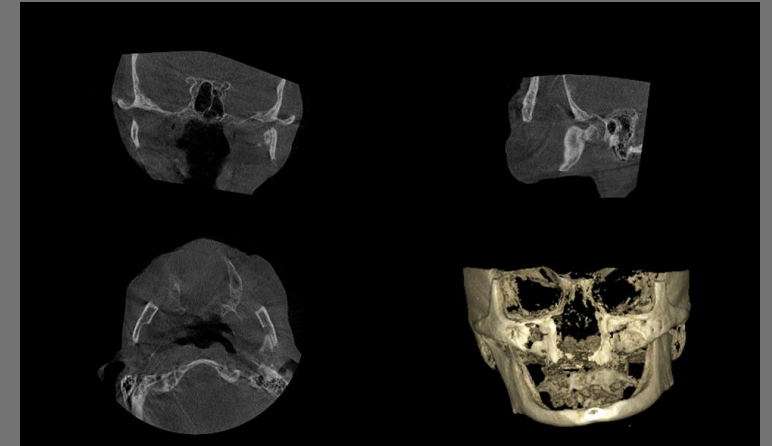
Lack of Respect from Medical Community

- Failure to support dental diagnosis
- Misunderstanding of fee structures and medical insurance coverage
- Licensure and Prescription Authority

Interprofessional Relationship Challenges: Case Examples

- 26-year-old patient with myalgia and chronic migraines without aura who has history of stroke: Nurse practitioner failed to respect request for medical support with low dose SNRI or TCA; NP recommended OTC soft mouthguard as alternative treatment because "dentists charge too much for bite splints." MD supported the NP during phone consultation

- 32-year-old patient with TMJ pain and headaches referred by another dentist: Patient checked with her medical insurance first who told her to go to an ENT; ENT told patient he could treat her appropriately with ear surgery.

Denture Patients and TMD

- Correlation of headaches and TMD rarely correlated with poor denture fit and function in practice and in literature

- Complete dentures rarely evaluated by physicians; denture patients do not receive regular dental examinations.

- Case Examples:

    1. Fractured condyle missed by ER MD

    2. Myalgia caused by poor occlusion

Confusion of "TMD" Definition

- "TMD is not caused by occlusion!"
- Temporomandibular disorders (TMD) include 30+ diagnoses
  - Bony
  - Cartilaginous
  - Muscular

"TMD" is not a diagnosis!

Underutilization of DC/TMD

- Continuing Education Centers (Spear, Pankey, Kois, etc.)

- ADA ???

- Accessibility and Awareness of DC/TMD Examination Protocol