

TMJ and the Lack of Access

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- The occurrence of TMJ problems is exceedingly small
 - It is the most used joint in the body and the least covered by insurance
 - Insurance will never deny a knee, hip or shoulder surgery but invariably deny a TMJ surgery

Who is most affected?

- Women make up 90% of TMJ patients !!
 - Joints are more lax and flexible.
 - Ligaments are more lax because they have babies
 - They are therefore more prone to displacement of the TMJ disc which if untreated can cascade into severe functional and structural problem that can cause inability open the mouth without pain and even severe facial deformity

Why the lack of coverage?

- There was pretty much universal coverage in the the 1980's through the early 1990's
- Abuses in the 1990's with over utilization of non-surgical treatment resulted in policy limitations which lead to exclusions
- “One bad apple spoils the barrel”

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- TMJ problems stem from trauma, birth defects, the aging process, various forms of arthritis and some of the most severe have no known cause

Forms of Treatment

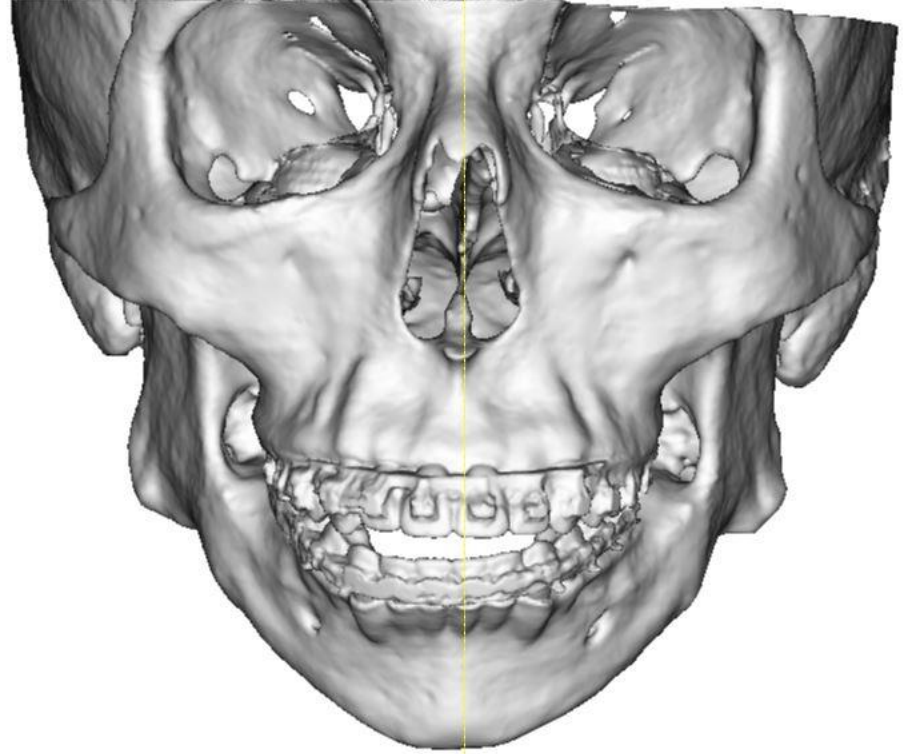
- Non-surgical oral appliances
- Physical therapy
- Joint lavage
- Arthroscopy
- Joint reconstruction or arthroplasty
- Joint replacement

This is the face of a TMJ patient



Ten years later







2/6/97Scale: 100%

Denney Jacquelyn
2/6/97 0.400s 16.0mA 0.400s
80.8mGv*cm²





912375 01 : Denney Jacquelyn
12/18/20 66.0kV 16.0mA 0.4s 80.8mGy*cm²
User Pmbridge



What is the success of surgery?

- 100% dependent on patient selection
- Nothing works well if the wrong intervention is performed
- Lavage of the joint is highly effective with resolution of pain in the 90% range
- Disc repositioning via anchors is above 85% effective
 - 93% effective in my cases
- Decompressive procedure like Vertical ramus osteotomy (IVRO) are above 90%
- Total joint replacement is as effective as knee, hip and shoulder replacement

What is a Win-Win solution for patients and Industry?

- Non-surgical treatment like oral appliances should be covered by dental insurance or have limited medical benefits
- Surgical treatment should be covered by medical insurance just like a knee, hip or shoulder
- Create a “Center for Excellence” where known surgical treatment algorithm’s are used
- Credential providers so only the most experienced surgeons participate- more experience means better outcomes....eliminate dabblers