Comparing the demographic profile and self-reported lifestyle and medical histories of female patients diagnosed with temporomandibular disorders to those diagnosed with other musculoskeletal disorders

Kraus, Steve¹; Taylor, Leslie²

1. Physiotherapy Associates, Atlanta, GA
2. Department of Physical Therapy, Mercer University, Atlanta, GA

PURPOSE
- To investigate the demographic profile and self-reported lifestyle and past medical histories of female patients diagnosed with TMD.
- To compare the data with those of female patients diagnosed with other musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) related to the spine or extremities.

BACKGROUND
- Musculoskeletal involvement of the temporomandibular joint (TMJ), masticatory muscles and associated structures are collectively known as a temporomandibular disorder (TMD).
- Women seek treatment for TMD much more often than males.
- To date, studies have focused on patients seen in the dental office or pain center.

SIGNIFICANCE
- This study is the first to describe and compare the experiences and presentations of a female population of patients with TMD to a female population of patients with other MSDs seen in a physical therapy outpatient practice.

DESIGN
Retrospective Study
Data Collection Period:
- April 2007 to April 2008
- November 2008 to May 2009

RESULTS
- Patients with TMDs saw on average 4.5 HCPs before seeing a physical therapist.
- In addition to being younger (p = .000), female patients with TMDs reported more complicated medical histories as evidenced by:
  - Medication use for mood disorders or neurochemical imbalances
  - Co-morbidities, Past Surgeries
  - Over the counter medications
  - Psychosocial issues
  - There were no differences in the patients' reports of having little interest in doing things, or experiencing excessive moodiness or hopelessness.

CONCLUSIONS
- Female patients with TMD reported more biopsychosocial issues than female patients with other musculoskeletal complaints.
- A more comprehensive understanding of the female TMD patient pertaining to their meaning of their symptoms, diagnosis, and expectations is warranted.
- Addressing these areas may reduce unnecessary anxiety and confusion which will have a positive impact on the physical therapist management of the female patient diagnosed with TMD.

CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS
- The role of the physical therapist is expanding in the examination, evaluation, and treatment of patients with TMD.
- Clinicians should have an understanding of the similarities and differences of patient presentations between these two groups in order to maximize positive treatment outcomes.

REFERENCES
- Orofacial Pain; Guidelines for Assessment Diagnosis, and Management. Editor Remy de Leeuw, 2008 4th ed, Quintessence Pub Co

CONTACT INFORMATION
Steve Kraus, PT, MTC, OCS, CCTT
www.TMDSteveKraus.com

Leslie Taylor, PT, PhD
http://cophs.mercer.edu/pt.htm