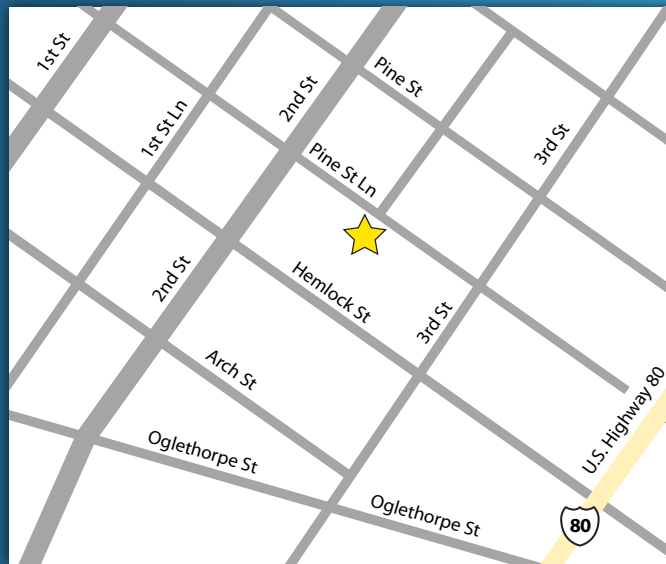




About the ENT Center of Central Georgia

The ENT Center of Central Georgia brings together the very best physicians and support staff dedicated to providing you an exceptional patient experience. In our pursuit to provide excellence in medical treatment, we listen to our patients and focus on their symptoms. We develop individualized treatment plans based on your unique needs and treat you like we would a family member. Whether you have hearing problems, allergies, dizziness, sinus infections, snoring, or any other ear, nose, and throat related problem, we can help.

For more information, contact one of the elite health care professionals at The ENT Center of Central Georgia today: 1-800-253-8953

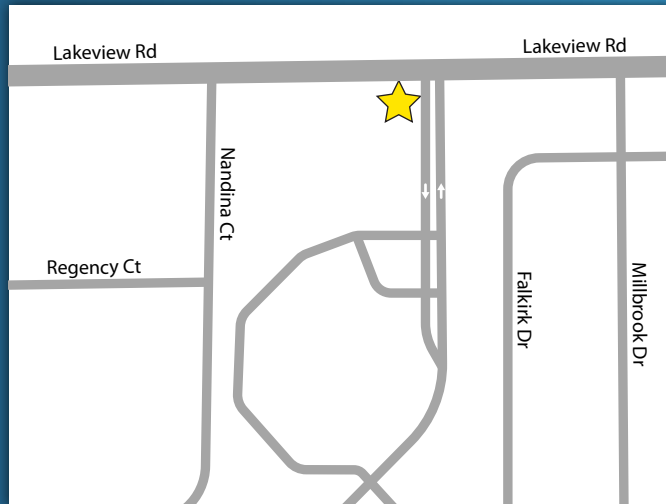


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The ENT Center of Central Georgia

Our Doctors Explain: TMJ



www.theentcenter.com



What Is TMJ?

TMJ stands for the ‘temporomandibular joint,’ which is not a condition, it’s merely your joint. Though over time, it’s colloquially become shorthand for an actual group of conditions that involve said joint and its surrounding jaw muscles— temporomandibular disorders (TMD).

The temporomandibular joint is made up of muscles, blood vessels, nerves, and bones. You have two TMJs, one for each side of your jaw. Think of them as hinges that connect your jaw to various bones of your skull, which are in front of each ear.

Chewing, yawning, moving your jaw side-to-side, up-and-down; when your temporomandibular joint is compromised or overused, the associated muscle pain is what people commonly know as TMJ.



What Are the Symptoms of TMJ?

For a lot of people, TMJ doesn’t necessarily signify a major problem, with pain usually subsiding without treatment. Chewing muscle discomfort, jaw muscle stiffness, pains in the face, jaw or neck—these are all everyday general experiences.

However, it can be a debilitating condition for others, ranging from limited jaw movement (lockjaw) to a change in the way the upper and lower teeth fit together.

How Is TMJ Diagnosed?

Although there is no standard test for diagnosing TMJ, with general facial pain and sinus and ear infections complicating the process, there are several ways your doctor can narrow down your symptoms.

Your doctor will likely do the following:

- Have you open and close your mouth while they listen and feel for abnormalities.
- Examine the range of motion of your jaw.
- Press around your jaw to find sites of pain or discomfort.

If your doctor is still having trouble pinpointing the issue, an oral surgeon or dentist is usually suggested, adding X-rays and MRIs to the process to get to the root of your problem.



How Is TMJ Treated?

Treatment for TMJ is often grouped into three distinct strategies—behavior modifications, medications and therapies.

Behavior modifications all revolve around avoiding excessive jaw opening and straining of the joint and surrounding muscles through methods like changing your diet.

The way of medications, non-narcotic drugs like Tylenol and anti-inflammatory ones such as Aspirin can help, muscle relaxants and anti-depressants beyond those.

And finally, therapies like jaw exercises, massages and ultrasounds, when paired with counseling, have been found to be effective.