
Facial pain and jaw joint problems

What causes facial pains?

Many people have pains in their face, mouth and jaws at some point in their lives. Sometimes, it is easy to work out the cause eg infected teeth. Other times, the causes of the facial pain can be complex and can include problems of:

- The jaw joint in front of the ears (called tempromandibular joint; TMJ) and its associated muscles used for chewing (masticatory muscles). These can produce the common complaints of: facial pain, joint clicking or grating, difficulty in opening your mouth wide and/or jaw locking.
- The teeth: toothache can feel as if it is in the face;
- The air sinuses, which are at the sides of your nose, under the cheeks, near the ears and above and behind the eyes.
- Migraine, which can give you pain on one or both sides of the face and other symptoms such as sickness, flashing lights etc.
- Trigeminal neuralgia and other severe nerve pains.

What can I do if I have facial pain?

Facial pain, either acute or chronic, can be very distressing. Do visit your dentist (or doctor) if you are worried.

Once we know the cause of the pain, there are several dental and other treatments we can offer you. If it is of sudden onset and is worrying you, it is probably a good idea to seek help soon by contacting your dentist or oral and maxillofacial surgeon.