

Orofacial Pain

Vesna Ambarkova*

Department for Preventive and Pediatric Dentistry, Faculty of Dentistry, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Republic of Macedonia

***Corresponding Author:** Vesna Ambarkova, Department for Preventive and Pediatric Dentistry, Faculty of Dentistry, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Republic of Macedonia.

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Now a day twenty-seven percent of American adults suffer from dental pain in any given year (47 million people), Thirty percent of American adults suffer from some form of facial pain In any given year (52 million people) and orofacial pain affects 57% of Americans each year (99 million people) [1]. Little is know about orofacial pain in children. Studies report that the prevalence of dental pain among preschool children ranges from 10.1% to 53.4% [2,3]. Fernandes IB., *et al.* for the first time use employing validated tools for assessing dental pain (DDQ-B) and caries (International Caries Detection and Assessment System, [ICDAS] for the evaluation of the factors associated with dental pain in children aged 1 - 3 years [4]. Through the reports of parents/caregivers about their children's behavior, the Dental Discomfort Questionnaire (DDQ) as an assessment tool was used to recognize dental pain in children 2 - 5 years of age. In their study they conclude that greater frequencies of dental pain were found in 1 - 3-year-old children from families with a low monthly income and dental caries with visible dentin with or without pulp involvement. The Dental Discomfort Questionnaire (DDQ) can be adapted for use in any country.

The socioeconomic impact of orofacial pain on daily life is very important. In one year, 44% of patients with dental pain will miss one or more days of work (20 million work days), or in one year, 17% of patients with facial pain will miss one or more days of work (9 million work days) and in one year, 61% of patients with orofacial pain will miss one or more work day (29 million work days). It is clear from these data that orofacial pain is a major public health problem all over the world.

Common forms of orofacial pain are headache, toothache, sinus pain, eye pain, salivary gland pain, jaw muscle pain and jaw joint pain. The diagnosis of the pain in the orofacial areas is very difficult, because of the numerous, extensively innervated structures located in this area [5]. Also, higher level of pain sensitivity among women with the association of hormonal factors may serve as a risk factor for developing orofacial pain [6]. The term "TMJ" actually means Temporomandibular Joint, which is the jaw joint. The term has been used inappropriately to describe a series of signs and symptoms that include facial pain, limitation of mouth opening, pain on chewing, clicking sounds in the jaw joint, headache and earache. The problem is that there are many conditions that can produce these same signs and symptoms and this has lead to considerable misdiagnosis and mistreatment of patients. The correct term for what has been referred to as "TMJ" is temporomandibular disorders ("TMDs"), which includes those conditions that involve the jaw joint and those that involve the muscles of mastication.

More than ten million Americans suffer from temporomandibular disorders (TMDs). Temporomandibular disorders are a major health problem [7].

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