

iSIC
2018

Kharkiv
Ukraine

ABSTRACT
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DIAGNOSIS OF TMJ DISORDERS IN MEDICAL STUDENTS

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Introduction. TMJ disorder is a group of diseases that affect the TMJ causing discomfort, pain and possibly irreversible damage. TMJ disorders is usually associated with the common symptoms of clicking when masticating, difficult chewing, and aching pain around the ear. According to some authors there are numerous causes for this group of disorders. The most common being malocclusion, stress and damage of the TMJ due to acute or chronic trauma. There are several groups at risk for developing TMJ disorder from mainly those between the age of 20 - 40 and those either genetic predisposed or those with high stress lives. The aim of the study was to identify the cause and frequency of TMJ disorders in students.

Materials and methods. We examined 30 students between the ages of 20 – 27, 60% (18) male and 40% (12) female. Anonymous survey was conducted among students studying in KNMU by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on the general health, dental health, and frequency of dental visits and whether or not the participant noticed any symptoms associated with TMJ disorder and when these symptom became prevalent. Emphasis was put on the activity and lifestyle during the period of disease.

Results. All 30 students considered themselves to be healthy and all visited the dentist a least once a year. All but 2 of the students reported comfortable sleeping and living conditions. None considered themselves to be chronic fatigued. Of the examined students 23% (7) reported signs of TMJ disorder. The main symptom that was complained about was clicking in the TMJ on one or both sides of the jaw. S-shaped deviation when opening their mouth was also noted. Periodical pain and headaches were observed by 10% (3). Of the 7 with TMJ symptoms 4 of them reported that their symptoms increased or appeared during the exam period.

Conclusion. In student's especially medical students the main cause of TMJ disorder is stress caused by exams and studying. Living conditions and dental health have no negative impact as medical students have frequent checkups.