

Does your head ache? Are your neck muscles tight? Are you in pain?

Solutions for a blustery winter from the Michigan Head & Neck Institute

Sometimes head or neck pain originates from a slip and fall that happened decades ago, or from an accident or a repetitive movement — even giving birth. Sometimes it's the result of unthinkable stress, such as losing your job or battling economic issues. Head and neck pain often produce sleeplessness or disturbed sleep. Pain and Sleep. Sleep and Pain. They're as intricately related as brother and sister, and can easily originate from the same source. The less pain you have, the better you sleep and with more sleep, comes the potential to heal.

"I have patients who only come to see me in the winter," explains Dr. Richard Klein, director of the Michigan Head & Neck Institute and an internationally known pain and sleep expert. In fact, Dr. Klein is held in high esteem at such far-reaching medical institutions as the Medical College of Beijing, Prince Phillips Hospital in Hong Kong, and the Canadian Dental Association in Montreal. In addition, Dr. Klein has been interviewed by CNN network news and is regarded as one of metro Detroit's most well-informed pain educators.

"So often, pain can be traced back to two conditions that are often overlooked," he says. "Those are TMJ and sleep apnea."

TMJ: Do you clench your jaw or grind your teeth? Do you hear a ringing in your ears or have ear pain? Are you sensitive to light, or do you have eye pain or blurred vision? Are you often fatigued or do you have problems with your equilibrium or balance? Do you hear a clicking in your jaw as you open your mouth to speak or chew, or experience a locking of the jaw joint?

Although these classic symptoms of TMJ are bothersome, they're often ignored until there's been permanent damage to the jaw joint. "That's unfortunate," says Dr. Klein, "because treatment for temporomandibular joint dysfunction rarely involves surgery when caught early. In fact, treatment is often soothing and eagerly anticipated at the Michigan Head & Neck Institute, because it can involve relaxing in a quiet, dimly lit room, with special massaging chairs. In more stubborn cases, a clear, removable mouthpiece may be custom-fitted. It's



worn consistently for a while, to return muscles to their correct positioning, and then it's only required at night, to prevent further damage.

Sleep Apnea: Are you a snorer, feverishly gasping for breath, awaking suddenly with a snort? You may not even know you do this, but your sleeping partner knows. It's a repertoire that can repeat itself hundreds of times a night, and it's dangerous — heart-stopping deadly, even. About 200,000 Americans die from sleep apnea-related problems annually. Short of death, it interferes with memory function, and causes depression and headaches. Fortunately, newer corrective devices are making the uncomfortable C-Pap masks of the past obsolete for many people. Throughout the night, a small portable mouthpiece repositions the tongue during sleep, opening blocked airways and preventing the problem.

Sleep apnea is an unpleasant condition that causes irritability in individuals. Sometimes the irritability is so severe, sufferers seem to acquire a different personality altogether. "Pain causes a buildup of chemicals in the body, producing irritability and sleeplessness. Without intervention, there's more irritability and more sleeplessness — until the individual behaves as though he or she has a full-blown case of PMS."

Patients find more than care inside the comforting walls of the Michigan Head & Neck Institute. They also find a kindred spirit in Dr. Klein, a fellow pain-sufferer who initiated his in-depth research when no one could offer him relief from his own debilitating symptoms. He, more than most, understands pain isn't a figment of someone's imagination. A severe auto accident in the 1990s left Dr. Klein in intense pain. Cancer, now in remission, also took its toll on the doctor, forcing him to find real solutions for a better way of life. To say that he has known pain is an understatement!

In this most blustery of winter months, Dr. Klein looks forward to relieving your pain. He reminds you that pain isn't terminal; it can be eased if you keep working at it.

Photo: Dr. Klein, the artist, shares a moment with a patient as an intimate look at his then-infant daughter is suspended in the background. In this painting, her tiny three-dimensional fist reconns with a swirling mass of energy representing the universe. "Lisa changed my universe," Dr.

Klein acknowledges. Then he beams, "Today, that little fist has a little fist of her own."

Richard Klein,
D.D.S., F.R.S.H., F.I.C.C.M.O., M.I.C.C.M.O.,
D.A.A.P.M., F.A.A.C.P., D.A.A.C.P.
Michigan Head & Neck Institute
 3665 E. Eleven Mile Road
 Warren, MI 48092
 Phone: 586-573-0438
www.tmjmichigan.com
www.sleepapneamichigan.com