

Does Your Neck or Head Hurt? Not Getting Enough Sleep? Deciphering the Clues at the Michigan Head & Neck Institute

Ever-curious and ever-probing for the elusive answer, Dr. Richard Klein reminds one a little of Columbo, the inquisitive trench-coated detective who usually unravels a case by zeroing in on the obscure.

This is how it works in medicine, too, Dr. Klein explains. “The human body is complicated. Many symptoms are common to more than one medical issue, so it sometimes takes a trial and error approach before physicians can definitively pinpoint the cause of a problem.” But when tests turn up negative, that doesn’t mean the pain you are feeling isn’t real. “It means there is more probing to do,” explains the tenacious Dr. Klein. When it involves the eyes, ears, neck, jaw and breath, that’s when it is time for his expertise to enter the picture. In Columbo-style, he begins asking his questions...

Could it be TMJ? Hearing loss, congestion, eye pain or **watering**, a buzzing in the **ears, and** jaw pain are all symptoms of TMJ. “But the body will fool you by concealing some of its mysteries,” counsels Dr. Klein. “It is also possible to have TMJ and not experience pain or the clicking of the jaw that is so often associated with Temporomandibular Joint Disorder. “

TMJ responds well to treatment. Because it is a joint, care resembles that which is often prescribed for other ailing joints. The first goal is to relieve the pressure, then identify and modify the lifestyle activities that aggravate it. Depending on the degree of damage that has been done to the body, TMJ may be treated using physical therapy -- and if it is even more severe, with injections and pharmaceuticals.

Incidentally, it was his own excruciating pain after an auto accident that led Dr. Klein to conduct his pain research around the world in hopes of finding solutions that would lessen his own aching sensations. For his efforts and his involvement on the national level of the American Academy of Cranial Facial Pain, he is now considered a leading expert in the areas of TMJ and Sleep Apnea. He was

astounded to learn how frequently TMJ and Sleep Apnea lie at the core of so many other pain problems. Once TMJ and Sleep Apnea are controlled, pain in other areas of the body has a better chance of lessening.

Persons with Sleep Apnea have multiple sleep issues -- these people have 2-3 times the number of sleep problems of the general population. Many who are afflicted don't know it, yet their sleeping partners are aware of a problem. Sleep Apnea is characterized by intense snoring -- long pauses between breaths -- feverish gasps to get air -- sudden awakenings (which might occur hundreds of times a night) -- and a distinctive snort. Snoring in and of itself isn't dangerous, but Sleep Apnea is. Because it is impeding air to the brain and heart, it can cause death; in less severe cases it contributes to memory problems, depression, and headaches -- "*not to mention irritability,*" adds Dr. Klein, who once considered himself among the irritable. (Today you will find Dr. Klein upbeat and happily engaged with his patients. "He is one of the most compassionate doctors you will ever meet," says one patient, "because he knows what it feels like to be miserable -- and then to feel better.")

Some people find a breathing mask suitable for controlling their Sleep Apnea, but others find it uncomfortable to wear all night long. Dr. Klein creates a special mouthpiece for these patients to insert at nighttime. It realigns the jaw, secures the tongue, and keeps the throat expanded so breathing isn't interrupted. It is more discreet than a mask, and it travels easier. Many health insurance companies cover costs.

"If you don't look for TMJ or Sleep Apnea, you don't find it," the detective in Dr. Klein acknowledges. "None of my patients had these issues until I started looking for it."

Richard Klein has treated over 10,000 patients at the Michigan Head & Neck Institute. Most come from physician referrals, though **some** refer themselves.

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 Rd.

Warren, MI 48092

Phone: (586) 573-0438

Website: www.TMJMichigan.com