



Arkansas Dental Health & TMJ Therapy Center

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TMJ SYMPTOMS CAN BEGIN AS PAIN IN NECK, SHOULDER AND UPPER BACK



DEBBIE BAKER

Many years ago I began to awaken unable to open my mouth. I could work my jaw with the palms of my hands until my mouth would finally open. My jaw would crack so loud when I ate that others at the table would cringe. The pain grew worse as time passed. I suffered earaches, headaches, neck, shoulder and upper back pain. If I needed to turn my head I would have to do it very slowly or the pain would shoot up my neck and into my jaw.

When I approached my physician about the pain his response was to write a prescription for a muscle relaxer. He also encouraged me to speak to my dentist who told me I had TMJ Disorder. He went on to explain that he did not have the training to work with this problem, which was basically what my dentist told me. It appears to me that TMJ disorder

is a problem that healthcare professionals are trying to avoid. I was surprised to learn that my insurance would not pay for TMJ treatment. I do not understand why insurance will not cover a problem for one of the most complex joints in the body.

Approximately eighteen months ago, I found Arkansas Dental Health and TMJ Therapy Center. I met with Dr. Sam Beavers and explained to him that since I was ten years old I had paid for the actions of an uninformed and somewhat careless dentist with embarrassment and increasing pain. After examination, he began to explain to me what treatment I would need to free me of the ever-increasing pain from TMJ disorder. I listened as he told me about the splint he would build that would force my jaw into position. He suspected that this disposition had come, gradually; from the time I had gone to the careless dentist at the age of ten. On my first visit, my jaw was off to the right and back and I was only able to open my mouth twenty-six centimeters, normal being forty-seven. I am truly amazed at the progress I have seen in just eighteen short months. I can now open my mouth forty-nine centimeters. I can laugh as hard as I want and do so with no pain. I feel like I can move my neck much like that of a small child. I thank God for Dr. Beavers; he has helped give me a quality of life I thought I would never have again.