

Prevalence, Intensity, and Correlation of Different TMJ Symptoms in Lebanese and Italian Subpopulations

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Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study was to compare self reported joint related temporomandibular disorder (TMD) symptoms in Lebanese and Italian dental and non-dental students and to detect any correlation between different symptoms.

Methods and Materials: A questionnaire was distributed in Sardinia (Italy) to dental and psychology students and in Lebanon to dental, physical therapy, and biology students to investigate the prevalence, intensity, and correlation of four temporomandibular joint (TMJ) symptoms.

Results: Prevalence of earache varied among the groups from 10.1% to 29.2%, ear stuffiness from 22.5% to 30.8%, TMJ pain from 13.2% to 21.2%, and TMJ sounds from 18.4% to 46.2%.

Discussion: Different prevalence and intensity of earache and TMJ sounds were found in the examined subpopulations diverse in cultural background and education. However, prevalence and intensity of ear stuffiness and TMJ pain were similar. Association between TMJ sounds and TMJ pain was detected in selected subpopulations, and correlation between one symptom on one side of the head with the same symptom on the contralateral side were noted suggesting most of these symptoms are bilateral.

Conclusion: The results of the study might be useful to anticipate the possible occurrence of associated symptoms or the same symptom on both sides of the head. Correlations with cultural background and education are difficult to establish.

Keywords: Temporomandibular disorder, TMD, temporomandibular joint, TMJ, epidemiology, TMJ sounds, TMJ pain, TMJ symptoms, earache, ear stuffiness

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