

Your Power



You have power. It is sometimes hard to see it, but you do. You have the power to make an impact on this condition. TOPS America desperately needs your help to make its effort effective. Without you, TOPS America might make slow, deliberate progress. With your help, we can move mountains!

Advocating *for* Change

Change is what is needed to help those who suffer from TMJD — Temporomandibular Joint Disorders

Advocacy

TOPS America works to support and/or oppose proposed legislation that affects TMJD sufferers. You can become involved by sharing your story with us and possibly with legislators and the media.

Letter Writing

When we support and/or oppose proposed legislation – your opinion counts with your government representatives. You can register on our website to help us in this work. You'll be notified when a letter or call to your legislator is needed.

Membership

You can become a member of TOPS America by calling 916-444-1985 or logging onto our website at www.TMJSociety.org. Your membership will ensure TOPS America can continue its mission. You will receive the latest information and updates on treatment, receive our newsletter, *Disclosure*, and ensure you're on our list when there are alerts and your help is needed.

Volunteer

Are you willing to share your TMJD related experiences, listen to others and offer support? If you would like to help further education and awareness of TMJD please volunteer by calling (916) 444-1985, or emailing us at: tmjliz@sbcglobal.net.

Donate

TOPS America is a not-for-profit organization. We rely upon the support of others to carry on our work. Your monetary contribution is welcome and essential to the continuation of that work. You can donate by credit card on line at TMJsociety.org or make your tax deductible contribution payable to:

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Temporomandibular Joint Disorders



This is an often misdiagnosed, mistreated condition. We need to change that situation. Those suffering with the misdiagnosed pain of TMJD must be more speedily diagnosed. Effective treatments need to be identified and implemented across healthcare disciplines by health and dental care providers. Already we know much more now than we did a few years ago — positive change!

What we know about TMJD today is that it involves inflammation and degeneration of the joint and muscles associated with chewing. For most, the discomfort associated with TMJD is generally mild, temporary and resolved with little or no intervention. However, for a growing population, predominantly of women, intervention is necessary.

Forward Momentum

TMJ Orofacial Pain Society of America (TOPS America) is a national not-for-profit organization created by consumers, patients, and providers to be the catalyst for change. The TOPS America advisory board is composed of a diverse group of patients and providers including dentists, physicians, physical therapists and TMJ radiologists.

TOPS America's goal is to achieve equity for TMJD diagnosis and treatment. TOPS America expects coverage, diagnosis and treatment of TMJD disorders equal to that of any other anatomical body joint.

The specific cause for TMJD continues to elude researchers, and in most cases, involves several joint-related disorders and symptoms. Yet each year brings us closer to understanding the cause and improving treatment protocol. This means treatment has also been allusive. It also causes the uncertainty in providers treating the condition as well as the resistance from insurers covering the condition.

Onward and Upward

To reach the goal of equity TOPS America is working and planning in a number of areas.

First, the fast growing not-for-profit is already working, monitoring and supporting TMJD related legislative efforts on a national level and in some states. The goal is to legislatively require insurers to improve coverage and access to coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of TMJD disorders. TOPS America is also quickly moving into more individual states to do the same.

In addition, the successful support programs developed by the TMJ Society of California are being taken national by TOPS America. The programs support and inform sufferers and provide the newest information to improve their health and wellbeing. Information is disseminated via an informational website, a quarterly newsletter and an "all-volunteer" hot line accessed by calling: (916) 444-1985.

As the National Institute of Dental Research further studies the cause, effect, and viable treatments options for TMJD, TOPS America is committed to bringing its members the most up-to-date information including self-care alternatives for the management of inflammation and discomfort.

TOPS America is working to build awareness about this disorder. It has expanded its ability to be effective and serve TMJD sufferers through participation and membership in state and national patients' rights organizations. Examples of those organizations have included Citizens for the "Right to Know Coalition" and the Access to Care and Treatment (ACT) Alliance. Participation in these coalitions and other campaigns maximizes TOPS America's manpower and resources.

TOPS America representatives speak nationally on consumer rights. We create educational materials for sufferers and decision-makers alike. Representatives of TOPS America participate on committees developing policies on disclosure, and coverage or limitations of insurance.

As an active member of the TMJ registry, TOPS America supports research to better understand the condition. Thanks to our board and members, TOPS America also works with research institutions, academia, providers, coalitions and associations to help ensure consumers are as aware and up to date about TMJD as possible.

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