

The issues of temporomandibular disorders (TMD) etiology, diagnosis, and management are one of the most intriguing fields of contemporary dentistry. Old paradigms relating the onset of TMD symptoms to supposed abnormalities of dental occlusion, and suggesting the need for occlusal therapies to treat TMD patients, have been progressively challenged by the scientific literature.

Over the years, evidence has accumulated to suggest that TMD are a major cause of orofacial pain requiring a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach that focuses on the many facets of the complex pain experience. High-quality literature supports the abandonment of biomechanical and instrumental approaches to TMD diagnosis and management in favor of an exhaustive biopsychosocial assessment.

The importance of some signs and symptoms has been revisited in the light of multiple clinical and imaging studies that dismantle, for example, the role of joint click sounds as a pathognomic sign of TMJ dysfunction. Pain, and not equivocally defined "dysfunctions", became the guiding symptom on the path to diagnosis and treatment.

Notwithstanding, difficulties in making a differential diagnosis with other orofacial pain, and in identifying those subjects at risk of chronic pain, are still present, and, importantly, it seems that the view of TMD as occlusion-related is hard to eradicate from the primary practitioner community.

These premises led to the idea of a multi-authored, evidence-based text that is, hopefully, clinically oriented enough to raise interest in all clinicians treating TMD, and to convince all readers that high scientific, ethical, and professional standards are now required in many fields of TMD practice.

All diagnostic and management procedures have been described, with a twofold emphasis on their clinical significance and evidence to support them, thus providing a useful guide for the everyday decision-making and treatment-planning process. Such an approach makes the book an essential tool for both specialist and non-specialist practitioners, as well as dental students seeking a deeper insight into current concepts of TMD.



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ISBN 1-85097-199-4



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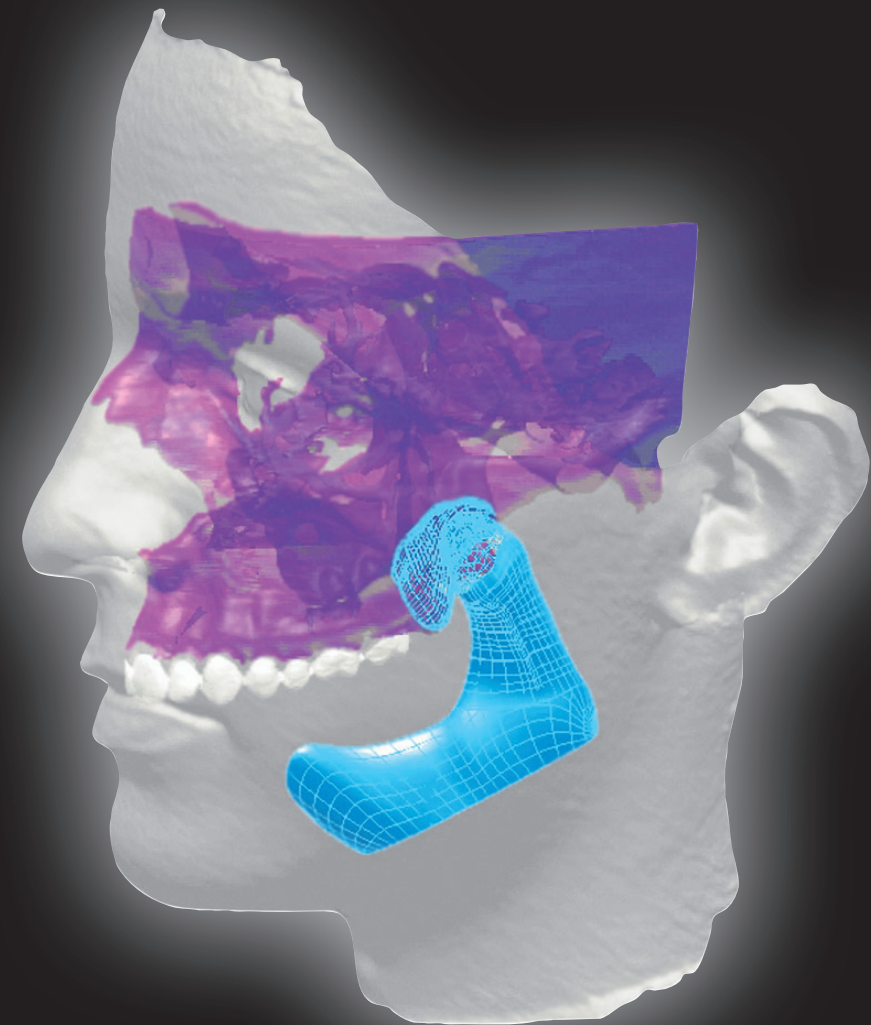
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