
Daniele Manfredini • Current Concepts on Temporomandibular Disorders



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Preface

When the idea to bring together some of the most renowned experts in the field to give form to a work on the state-of-the-art knowledge of temporomandibular disorders (TMD) came to my mind, I was inspired to pursue that dream. But then I realized how difficult a task I was undertaking and doubts started to cloud my mind.

Classically, the TMD field has been characterized by a paradigmatic contrast between the guidelines provided by the scientific community and beliefs of clinical practitioners, who still look at dental occlusion as the main etiopathogenetic factor and the primary therapeutic target. The ambitious aim of this work is to keep on seeking a synthesis between these two cultures, as has already been attempted by some other recent textbooks on this subject. So the focus of all the contributors has been on the need to present scientifically sound information in a clinically useful manner.

This book will probably be one of the last in which the term “temporomandibular disorders” is used, since terminological specifications will hopefully be introduced in the near future, as soon as there is an improvement in knowledge about the pathophysiology of these disorders. Indeed, the absence of a validated pathophysiological model for many TMD symptoms has led to the adoption of this generic term to group together signs and symptoms with different etiopathogenesis and, more importantly, to adopt a symptomatic and common approach towards the management of diseases of the temporomandibular joint and

muscles. For this reason, Part 2 of the book, which is dedicated to etiology of TMD, is the only one in which specific chapters are devoted to the supposedly different groups of disorders, namely muscle disorders, disc displacements, and arthrosis/arthrititis. The third and fourth parts on diagnosis and management reflect the current view that the approach to TMD patients is seldom different for joint and muscle symptoms, to the point that only a minority of treatment modalities are exclusively indicated for a specific disorder.

Along with this underlying premise, the main thrust of the book is the medically based view of TMD, which cannot be considered pertinent to the dental profession alone.

All the chapters reflect the considerable efforts of the contributors to capture the reader's attention without abandoning their roles as academicians, scientists, and researchers. I have learnt that the greatest personalities are also the most modest ones, and this adventure has confirmed this for me. I have had the honor to work with 43 outstanding world-renowned authors in the TMD and orofacial pain field, and none of them has ever refused to exchange opinions, accept advice, or provide suggestions. To all of them I give my most grateful thanks for agreeing to be part of this project, one of the most exciting of my professional career to date.

Together we hope that our efforts will be appreciated by the heterogeneous community of TMD readers and practitioners.

Dedication

*To Debora, Aurora, Giacomo
Love, Life, Smile*

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