Chapter 6
Joint Vibration Analysis (JVA)

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ABSTRACT

This chapter describes Joint Vibration Analysis (JVA) technology that assesses pathological changes that can occur within the Temporomandibular joints. Joint Vibration Analysis (JVA) uses tissue accelerometers to objectively capture vibrations given off by structurally compromised internal TM Joint anatomy. The structural breakdown leads to altered mandibular movement patterns during chewing function. Different attributes of representative JVA vibrations have been shown to indicate the presence of various disease states often seen within the Temporomandibular Joint complex. After being recorded, the JVA software displays the various vibration waveforms for clinician analysis to determine the specific internal derangement present. This chapter provides an overview of the various vibratory waveforms that indicate TM Joint pathology and illustrates the utility of Joint Vibration Analysis as a Temporomandibular Joint diagnostic adjunct.

INTRODUCTION

Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) Anatomy

The Temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is a ginglymoarthrodial joint, which is also diarthrodial, in that it translates and rotates throughout function. It is comprised of the following components:

- The posterior slope of the eminentia,
- The mandibular condyle,
- The articular disc
- The synovial tissue

- The vascular and innervated retrodiscal tissue, which includes the posterior attachment of the articular disc to both the mandible and to the temporal bone
- The posterior attachment tissue, which is vascular and innervated

The articular disc is a biconcave fibro-cartilaginous capsule that normally rests between the head of the mandibular condyle and the articular eminence of the temporal bone. The disc is attached to the lateral and medial poles of the condyle, while also being elastically attached posteriorly to the temporal bone and the mandible. Anteriorly, the disc is attached to a
few fibers of the superior belly of the lateral pterygoid muscle, which assists in translating both the disc and the condyle forward upon excursions of the mandible (Figure 1).

Through normal excursive movements of the mandible, the Temporomandibular joint is required to both rotate and translate. A healthy joint will perform this task without giving off any sounds or vibrations throughout its entire range of motion (Ishigaki, Bessette, & Maruyama, 1993).

In a healthy occlusion, during function there exists synergy with the coordination of the firing and relaxation of the opposing elevator and depressor muscles (Higashi, 1989). Masticatory muscle coordination results from the sensory input of the teeth, the muscles themselves, the Periodontal Ligaments, the tongue, and the oral soft tissues. The input from these organs creates a pattern of muscle activity, or muscle engrams, that are founded within a pool of neurons located within the brainstem, that is known as the Central Pattern Generator (CPG) (Lund, 1991; Ishigaki, Bessette, & Maruyama, 1993).
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