

19th Annual SRISD Scientific Conference: TMJ Study

This past November I attended the 2014 Spine Research Institute of San Diego Scientific (SRISD) annual conference. The keynote speaker was Dr. Paul Ivancic of the Yale Biomechanics laboratory. Paul wrote a short introduction in our last newsletter (#161). The SRISD annual event reviews all the new scientific literature published in engineering and medical journals relating to Whiplash and injury. As always, the program was interesting and relevant to our specialized practices. In the next few newsletters I will present summaries of some of the literature for your consideration.

The first study I will share is interesting because it relates to TMJ issues, an area that is generally understudied. The study is *Sale H, Bryndahl F, Iseberg A: A 15-year follow-up of tempromandibular joint symptoms and magnetic resonance imaging findings in whiplash patients: a prospective, controlled study. Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral 117(4):522-532, 2014.* These researchers followed 60 consecutive whiplash patients with MRI at inception and again 15 years later. At inception, one year, and 15 years a questionnaire was also completed. Fifty seven patients completed the study and were matched to 50 controls. The study showed that the prevalence of TMJ symptoms was significantly higher in whiplash patients than the control subjects at inception and throughout the study period. Interestingly, the MRI findings were not significantly different between the two groups at any point throughout the study (63% vs 55%). The authors conclude that TMJ symptoms, both immediate and delayed, is common in whiplash patients.

Of note in this study is that gender seems to play a role in post whiplash TMJ symptoms with females having a higher prevalence. 6 of the females demonstrated MRI findings of sclerosis, erosion and change in condyle shape. The authors noted that *“1 of 3 patients exposed to whiplash trauma could be expected to demonstrate TMJ symptoms beyond those corresponding to the natural course”*. The authors conjectured that a possible explanation for the pain is referred pain for the convergence of trigeminal nerve and upper cervical nociceptors onto the trigeminal brainstem complex. This is something that chiropractors find particularly interesting since our cervical spine manipulations can often help with the modulation of these nociceptive (pain) signals.

In the next newsletter I will continue with some scientific research reviews from the conference. In the mean time, I am pleased to announce that we have finally accommodated the many requests we have had to re-open the **Shaw Chiropractic Group office in Middletown**. We are located at 62 Washington Street which is the same location as 10 years ago with free parking. We are also now offering a shuttle service for those patients whose accident has left them without transportation. This is our second van for the practices and will service all surrounding towns including Meriden, Portland and Cromwell. The direct phone is 860-788-3631. My team and I look forward to helping your clients' health care and rehabilitation needs.

I would also like to announce that **Dr. Monica Nowak has joined our chiropractic team**. Dr. Nowak brings 12 years of experience as a chiropractic physician. She is bilingual in English and Polish and has a great passion for helping patients with their injuries and return to optimum function. She will be attending to patients in all of our offices initially and learning our management protocols and eventually migrate into the Middletown office as the lead physician. I am excited to have her on the team as she possesses the same characteristics that have made our other providers on our team the best the profession has to offer. Feel free to welcome her to our practice at Dr.Nowak@ShawChiropractic.com. As always, I am available to answer your questions at Dr.Shaw@ShawChiropractic.com