

Standardizing Terminology and Assessment for Orofacial Conditions in Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis: International, Multidisciplinary Consensus-based Recommendations

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Hallo, my name is Peter Stoustrup and I am the corresponding author to the article: Standardizing Terminology and Assessment for Orofacial Conditions in Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA).

Arthritis in the temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is a common finding in patients with JIA. The condition is referred to as TMJ arthritis.

Initially, TMJ arthritis may occur without any signs and symptoms; however, as the condition progresses, TMJ arthritis may lead to orofacial pain, dysfunction, with significant impact on general quality of life. In addition, TMJ arthritis may also impact dentofacial growth and development, and can lead to degeneration of the joint components.

Management of TMJ arthritis involves interdisciplinary efforts, involving specialties like pediatric rheumatologist, maxillofacial surgeon, radiologist, pediatric dentist, special trained orthodontists, physiotherapists, and orofacial pain specialists.

Within the last decade, increased clinical and research attention has been given to the orofacial manifestation of JIA. However, as research has increased, so has the confusion with the terminology used.

So the aim of the present study was to propose standardized consensus-based terminology to optimize communication across healthcare providers involved in the management of TMJ arthritis. We also wanted to propose the best method of assessment for each of the terms defined.

The study group consisted of 28 experts representing 22 European and North American centers. All relevant specialties were involved in the study group.

Using a sequential approach involving item generation, consensus meeting, content validity assessment, and Delphi study, we defined 7 operational terms.

The 7 operation terms are TMJ arthritis, TMJ involvement, TMJ arthritis management, dentofacial deformity, TMJ deformity, TMJ symptoms, and TMJ dysfunction. A specific definition was linked to each of the 7 terms. It is beyond the scope of this presentation to go over all of the 7 definitions. However, let

us just take a look at the important relationship between the terms “TMJ arthritis” and “TMJ involvement” as this is an area of confusion to many of us. TMJ arthritis is defined as “the presence of active inflammation in the TMJ”. In contrast, the less restrictive term “TMJ involvement” has also been introduced, defined as “abnormalities presumed to be the result of TMJ arthritis”.

The term “TMJ involvement” is intended for clinical situations in which no contrast-enhanced magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) verification of active TMJ inflammation has occurred, but where signs, symptoms, and/or radiological findings suggest the presence of former or active TMJ arthritis. It can also be used in patients with no current MRI evidence of active TMJ inflammation, known as “TMJ arthritis,” but with abnormalities indicating previous TMJ arthritis.

In addition, we also proposed the best method of assessment for each of the 7 operational based on the definition given to the specific term.

Standardized terminology provides an optimal platform for communication across healthcare providers involved in management of JIA. We encourage clinicians and researchers to go with the proposed definitions and terms as a reference standard for the future work.

I hope you will find our article relevant and useful for your clinical work

On behalf of all authors, I will like to thank you for your attention.



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