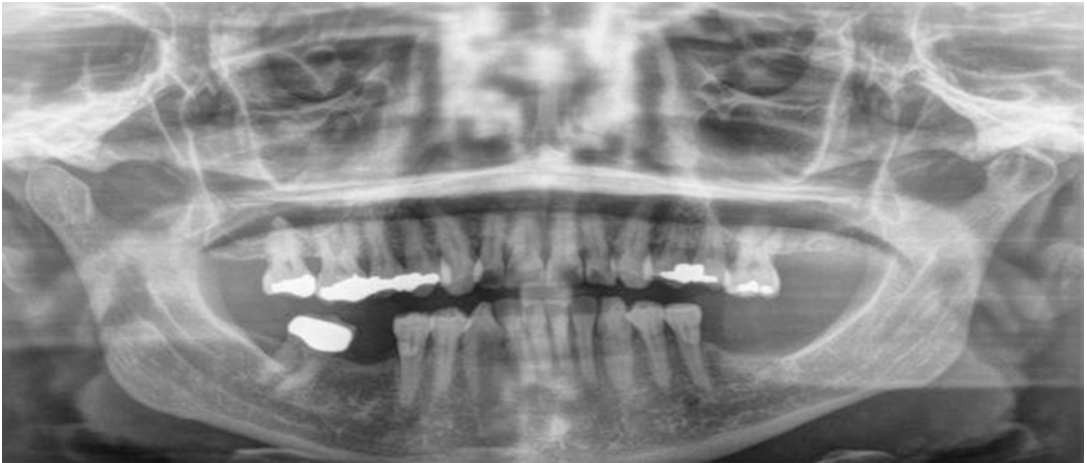


THE SEARCH FOR BALANCE

By Dr. Pamela Marzban



Pain is not normal. Severe, constant pain robs people of their everyday life. Finding the source of pain can be extremely difficult, especially when it comes to the head and neck area of the body. While backaches are the number one reason that patients seek out a doctor, head and neck pain is the second; therefore, it is quite common.

No matter how closely you look at the image above, you can't see pain in an X-ray. A patient, for the sake of this article let's call her Lisa, was having extreme pain on the left side. The pain was radiating from around the ear. Lisa had been to more than three medical doctors for examinations, MRI's, and various types of CAT Scans. She also had treatment with chiropractors, massage therapists, and physical therapist to help alleviate some of her muscular pain. There were no signs of tumors, infections or decayed teeth; yet the pain was so severe, it was all she could think about.

While some of the treatment she endured provided her with temporary relief, nobody could tell her the cause of her pain. Ultimately, she was placed on a cocktail of anti-depression medica-

tion, sleep medication and neurologic depressors. This helped to dull the pain and make life more tolerable, but for Lisa, this was not the quality of life she wanted so she continued her pursuit for answers and a solution.

The area around the ear is extremely complex, consisting of the temporomandibular joint, blood vessels, tendons, ligaments and the most complex nerve system in the body - the trigeminal nerve. Not only is this area complicated and intricate, but it is also the most used joint and muscle system in the body. Because of its complexity, the system of chewing, eating, swallowing, clenching and talking needs to be in balance. When this is unbalanced, a common result is severe muscle pain caused by trigger points or muscle spasms.

Our bodies seek balance and as I mentioned before, pain is not normal. As humans, we have the ability to accommodate to our given situations and we choose to tolerate circumstances because we just don't know any better or are too tired and busy to deal with change. We can continue to fill our cup of emotional/biophysical tolerance until one day the cup is so full it spills over or breaks. How do you feel?



Dr. Pamela Marzban is a dentist in practice in Fairfax County. If you have dental questions you can call her at **703-323-8200** or visit her at www.marzbandds.com