

## **Relationship between premature loss of primary teeth and the development of temporomandibular disorders in children.**

**AIM:** This study evaluated the prevalence of signs of temporomandibular disorders (TMD) in children with and without premature loss of primary teeth. **SAMPLE:** Fifty-eight children, aged 4-6 years, with missing primary molars, were compared with 58 age- and sex-matched control children with complete primary dentitions. **METHOD:** All the children underwent an examination that consisted of palpation and assessment of the joints and associated muscles for tenderness and joint sounds. Maximum vertical opening and deviation during jaw opening were also recorded. Children with any single anomalous finding were designated positive for TMD signs. **RESULTS:** There were no statistically significant differences in the prevalence of single or collective TMD signs between the two groups. **CONCLUSION:** The results of this study show that premature loss of primary teeth, uncomplicated by other factors, does not appear to be an aetiological factor for TMD development.