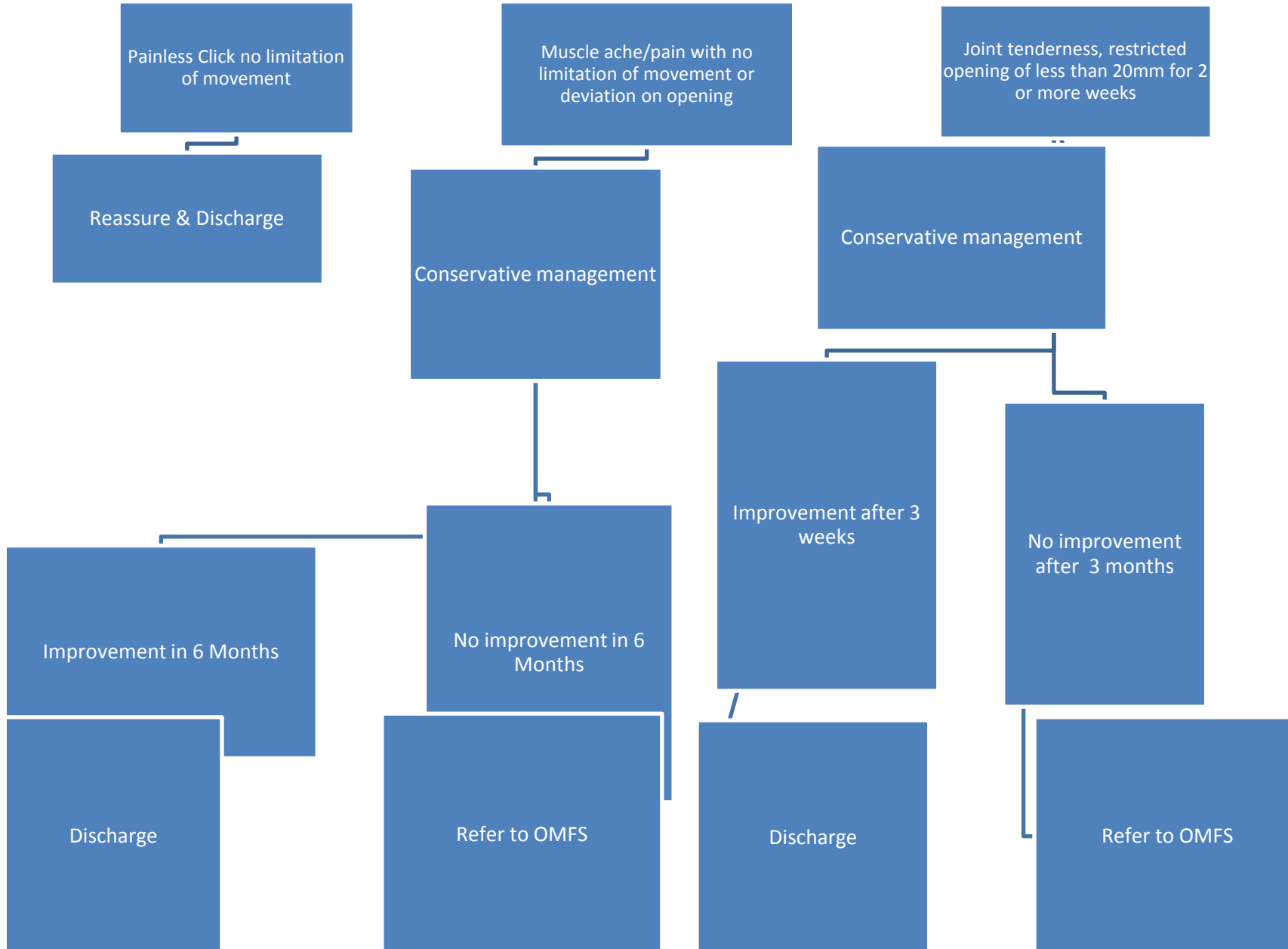


Essex TMJ Referral Pathway



TMJ Pain – Guidance for Dentists

Introduction

- Temporomandibular joint disorders (TMDs) are musculoskeletal disorders of the masticatory system
- It is most common in females between the age of 20-40.
- 80% of the population will experience one or more symptom in their lifetime. Up to 8% seek treatment and only 2% will require surgical intervention.

Signs & Symptoms

Symptoms

- Pain
 - Headaches
 - Noises
 - Locking
 - Clenching/grinding
- Additionally – often anxiety, depression

Signs

- Clicking/crepitus
- Tenderness of TMJ or muscles of mastication
- Limitation of opening
- Deviation on opening

Aetiology

Repeated motions – parafunction

- Clenching/grinding
- Nail biting
- Habitual lip movements
- Cheek biting
- Thumb sucking
- Jaw posturing

- Trauma
- Arthritis
- Connective tissue disease

Diagnosis

Primary role is to recognise which component is causing their problems for example:

1. Painless click with no limitation of movement – due to meniscus
2. Muscle aching without limitation of movement or deviation on opening – muscles
3. Joint tenderness, restricted opening of less than 20mm for 2 or more weeks – bones or non-reducible meniscus

Conservative Management

- Encourage the patient to break parafunctional habits
- Soft diet
- Chew on back teeth
- Heat compress
- Avoid maximum opening
- Analgesia – NSAIDs
- Relaxation & Stress management
- Jaw exercises