

Home Exercises for TMJ

Relax Jaw Muscles

1. Open the mouth until your jaw muscles feel some stretching, about 75% of maximum
2. Hold your mouth open for 20 seconds then close slowly until your lips touch
3. Open slowly and repeat 5 times for about 2 minutes. Perform 4x/day and whenever your teeth are touching or clenching



Strengthen Jaw Opening Muscles

1. Rest the “tip” of your jaw between the middle and index finger of a closed fist with your forearm against your chest. Hold gentle pressure against your chin while slowly opening and closing. Your head stays in one place during exercise.
2. Keep the muscles under the chin tense while opening and closing using the pressure of the arm to close the mouth until the lips touch
3. Repeat 20x or until the muscles fatigue



Prevent Side to Side Jaw “Over motion”

1. Place the tip of your tongue a little behind the top teeth on the side away from the “popping” side or the side that moves too much
2. Keeping the tongue in contact with the roof of the mouth open and close slowly. Do this 20x 4x/day. Watch in a mirror to self correct yourself in order to open and close your mouth evenly.
3. You can also tape a piece of floss to the mirror to self correct. Try to keep a visual of the floss between you’re upper and lower front two teeth.



Prevent Jaw Jutting Forward (Protruding)

1. Place the tip of your tongue near the back (soft) part of the roof of your mouth
2. Maintain your tongue contact while you open and close our mouth 20x 4x/day. Watch in a mirror to self correct and open and close your mouth evenly.



Jaw Expansion Exercise

1. Using a stack of popsicle sticks that matches how far you can comfortably open your mouth, place the stack of popsicle sticks in your mouth between the back upper and lower teeth.
2. Add one popsicle stick to the current stack to expand the jaw. Keep the stack of popsicle sticks there for 30-60 seconds 4x/day.
3. Continue to add one popsicle stick per week until the stack reaches 40-48mm.



Posture Reset

1. Standing up straight and tall, with your chest up and shoulders back, place both arms out 45 degrees from your body.
2. Holding the position from step #1, rotate the palms of your hands so that they are up to the ceiling and your thumbs are pointing behind you.
3. Now squeeze your shoulder blades together and move your chin back as if to make a double chin. You should feel tightness in the back of your neck and between your shoulder blades.



Your TMJD care will be a collaborative effort between this office and you. We find that our TMJD patients that get the best possible results follow these lifestyle modifications during their treatment in our office. Please let us know if you have any questions about the information below.

Dietary Modifications/Concerns:

- No gum, hard candy, apples must be sliced, no large sandwiches, no nuts, no chewing ice
- Choose softer foods for the initial phase of care, take small bites
- Decrease Stimulants – soda, coffee, tea, energy drinks, dietary supplements that have a thermogenic effect
- No red meat or wild game foods – instead eat fish or chicken
- At times a liquid diet is needed to allow the joint to rest and recover from the changes being made

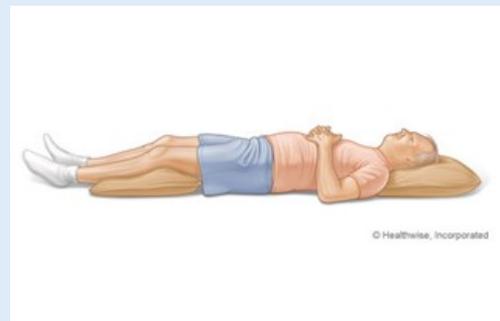


Posture— specifically Forward Head Posture

- Workspace/desk
- Phone
- Texting
- Email
- Social Media
- Car

Sleeping Positions

- Back preferred,
- Side causes Pressure on TMJ



Grinding of the teeth can occur as a side effect of taking certain medications. These include some psychotropic drugs such as antidepressants and antipsychotics. Consult prescribing physician before making any medication changes.

Potentially Problematic Medications (Obisesan, 2005)

Effexor (venlafaxine)

Haldol (haloperidol)

Luvox (fluvoxamine)

Paxil (paroxetine)

Prozac (fluoxetine)

Zoloft (sertraline)