



Temporomandibular Joint/Muscle Dysfunction Home Care Instructions

The success of treating your jaw joint will depend in large part upon the way you treat these injured areas. The following instructions can enhance healing of this area.

1. For the next few months, be sure to cut all foods into small, bite sized pieces and try to avoid opening your mouth any wider than the thickness of your thumb (1/2 inch)
2. Do not eat hard crust of bread, tough meat, raw vegetables, or any other foods that will require prolonged chewing.
3. Do not chew peanuts, ice cubes, or any other substance that is repeatedly milled between your back teeth.
4. Do not chew gum, bite your lips, clench your teeth or habitually chew the inside of your cheeks.
5. Do not thrust your lower jaw forward as when biting off a piece of thread, applying lipstick, and smoking or through force of habit.
6. Do not bite any food with your front teeth.
7. If you must yawn, limit the distance your mouth opens by pulling your lower lip over the edges of your lower teeth or by pushing up under your chin with your fist clenched.
8. Make every effort not to strain your jaw joints unnecessarily by such activities as talking excessively, deliberately popping your jaw joint as one would pop their knuckles of his hand, leaning on the palm of your hand while reading or watching TV, etc.
9. Avoid talking on the phone with the same ear every time. Alternate sides. Hold the phone with your hand, not your shoulder.
10. Try to sleep on your back. Avoid sleeping on the side of your face or on your fist.
11. During all times of stress, and also while waiting to fall asleep at night, say to yourself, "Lips together, teeth apart," over and over again.
12. Try not to do strenuous work or lift items weighing more than 10 pounds above your waist because when your jaw muscles and jaw joints are out of balance, your body is out of balance and your pain will probably increase due to this imbalance.
13. Avoid activities that raising one or both arms over your head (i.e washing or painting ceilings, reaching for overhead items, sleeping with hands over head, etc)
14. A low fat diet should be maintained to the fact that fats produce acids and are hard to digest. Therefore, milk, cream and eggs should be avoided because of their high content. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO STAY ON A HIGH PROTEIN DIET.** T may be advisable to take a multiple vitamin preparation to insure adequate vitamin intake.
15. **PREPARE FOODS BY: BROILING, BAKING, OR PRESSURE COOKING. DO NOT FRY.**
16. Please make every effort too NOT drink caffeine, alcohol, or use any form of tobacco. If you have any questions concerning this discuss it with the doctor.

These few simple rules can easily allow you to avoid such jaw movements that might re-injure your joints, muscles or ligaments.

7500 Bryan Dairy Road, Ste C Largo, FL · (727) 548-7100

mouthdocs.com · mouthdocs@gmail.com