

Jaw Exercises for TMJ



Jaw exercises for TMJ do not take a long time but they can really help the discomfort, misalignment and sound associated with this condition. Symptoms of TMJ include pain in the jaw or in the neck areas. You can't move your jaw well because of stiffness. Your jaw locks up on you and often pops or clicks in the joint and your teeth don't quite fit together like they used to.

Jaw exercises for TMJ help to ease and relax the muscles in your jaw assisting it to return to normal position and function. The exercises are relatively quick and simple if you are persistent and go slowly you will see results in most cases. They mainly consist of slow gentle movements that are repetitive.

Hot/Cold Application

Use heat on both sides of the jaw. Take a warm, wet towel and wring out excess water. Apply the towel gently to both sides of the face for 2 minutes then do a 30 sec cold towel scrub. This increases the blood flow to the jaw muscles. After two to three applications, the jaw should be a little more flexible.

Massage

Take two fingers and gently massage the jawbone on both sides of the face. Be careful to work the fingers into the jaws as gently as possible in order to avoid any further pain.

Muscle & Posture Retraining

Nodding: Make sure that the head posture is good and not jutting forward. Keep your head level and bring it back and up standing straight at military attention. Keep the tongue on the roof of the mouth with the jaw relaxed and the teeth slightly separated. Keep your head tall as you nod up and down ten times which keeping the neck still. Instill posture with a relaxed jaw as a constant habit.

Tongue-On-Roof: Try putting your tongue on the roof of your mouth back away from the teeth, opening your mouth wide with your tongue in place,

Resisted Jaw Motion

Make a fist and place it directly under your chin. Balance the weight of your fist and press as you gently try to open your jaw as above. Try not to allow your jaw to click while performing this exercise. Hold for ten seconds. Release and repeat ten times.

Take your fist and press against the left side of your jaw, below the hinge. Press your jaw against your fist and maintain a steady pressure. The isometric energy should relax the muscles in your jaw. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat 10 times before switching to the opposite side of your jaw.

Press against your jaw with one finger on each side. Apply pressure evenly to both sides. Open the jaw very slowly and do not allow the jaw to click. If your jaw clicks, release and start again, opening more slowly. The pressure on each side should allow your jaw to open and close in correct alignment.

Jaw Motion & Stability

Once your jaw is relaxed and aligned, with a loose jaw and mouth, hold your chin between your thumb and pointer finger. Very carefully and loosely, shake your chin back and forth, allowing your jaw to relax and release.

Do not attempt if this exercise if it causes you pain. Continue until your jaw feels loose, aligned and relaxed. Repeat these exercises once a day or more often if necessary to align your jaw. With jaw alignment and practice, your jaw will eventually memorize the relaxed positions and do them automatically.

Jaw Stretching

Stretch your jaw by opening your mouth very widely. Try to open your mouth as widely as you can, but do not cause yourself any pain. In this position place your thumb under your chin and push upwards for three seconds without letting your jaw close. Repeat this process three times allowing your jaw to relax in between and trying to open further each time.

Next open your jaw fully and place a finger on your lower teeth gently pulling down for three seconds. Repeat this process three times allowing your jaw to relax in between and trying to open further each time.

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Chewing

Keep your mouth closed and pretend you are chewing a piece of gum. Try to keep your jaw straight while you do the exercise. This exercise helps to realign the jaw in many cases.

Upper Body Stretching & Mobility

Jaw: Stretching your jaw by opening it as wide as you can several times a day helps to alleviate headaches.

Eyes: Alternate between opening your eyes as wide as possible and then squeezing them tightly shut and holding in each position for 3 seconds. Repeat this process three times throughout day.

Neck: Rotate the neck to the left until you reach maximal rotation. Then place your palm on the right cheek and gently try to turn back to the right into your palm without letting your head move. Hold for 3 seconds before relaxing and trying to rotate further to the left. Repeat this three times then switch sides.

Hold your head upright place your palm on one side of your head and try to push it into your palm for three seconds, than switch sides before repeating process front to back. Stretch the neck side to side using your hands as needed.

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