

Atlanta Oral & Facial Surgery

Comprehensive Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

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DO's & DON'T's OF TMJ

We have begun to treat your

temporomandibular joint/muscle dysfunction. Our success will depend in large part upon the way you treat these injured areas. The following instructions will greatly enhance the correction and healing in this area.

1. In 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 crusts of bread, tough meat, raw vegetables, or any food 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 in biting off a piece of thread, in applying lipstick, in 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 up over the edges of your teeth.
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 the 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 shoulders.
10. Try to sleep on your back. Avoid sleeping on the side of your face or in your fist.
11. During all times of occupational, marital or academic 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 so strenuous work or lift items weighing more than 10 lbs. above your waist as your muscles and its joints are out of balance, and your pains will probably increase due to this imbalance.
13. Avoid activities that require raising one or both arms over 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 due to the fact that fats produce acids and are hard to digest. Therefore, milk, cream, and eggs should be avoided because of their high fat content. It is important to stay on a high protein diet. It may be advisable to take a multiple vitamin preparation to insure adequate vitamin intake.
15. Prepare foods by: broiling, boiling, baking or pressure cooking. DO NOT FRY.

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

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