

JAW PAIN & DYSFUNCTION RECOMMENDATIONS

AKA

TMJ Dysfunction or Temporomandibular Joint Dysfunction

Symptoms

May be mild or severe. May go undiagnosed for years

Jaw pain, tightness, headaches, ear pain, tooth pain, popping, clicking or locking of jaw

Cause of TMJ Dysfunction

Trauma, dental work (braces, crowns, oral surgery), teeth clenching or grinding, birth trauma, stress, Idiopathic (unknown)

Chiropractic Treatment

Soft Tissue Mobilization, Jaw Distraction, Intra-Oral Massage, Class IV Laser Therapy, Trigger Point Therapy, Cervical Manipulation, 30-minute TMJ Massage Protocol

Home Care:

- **Modify Chewing/Eating**
 - Stop chewing gum completely
 - Avoid biting into foods with your front teeth (ie. pizza, biting nails)
- **Decrease Muscle Tension**
 - Avoid clenching and grinding if you are aware of it
 - Practice relaxing your jaw muscles several times per day
 - Always hold a relaxed jaw with your teeth slightly apart
- **Maintain Alignment Exercise**
 - Look into a mirror every morning after brushing your teeth and watch yourself slowly open and close your mouth keeping your upper and lower teeth aligned. It may help to keep your teeth in line if you hold your index finger vertically in front of the center of your mouth.

Anti-inflammatory Home Care

- **Ice for pain**
 - 15 minutes per hour on the Masseter or Temporalis with a cloth between the ice and the skin.
- **Warmth for tension**
 - Use a warm wash cloth or warm pack for 10 minutes on the Masseter or Temporalis as needed.
- **Supplemental Care - Calcium and Magnesium can help with muscle relaxation**
 - Ie. Myocalm from Metagenics
- **Retraction Exercises**
 - Jut the jaw forward and side to side gently 3 times in each direction
- **Isometric Exercises**
 - While jutting the jaw forward or side to side use gentle resistance with your hand to prevent motion. Do this once forward and to each side once daily holding for 10 seconds