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INSTRUCTIONS

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tmj

Success in our management of your **temporomandibular joint/muscle dysfunction** will depend in large part upon the way you treat these sensitive/injured areas. The following instructions will greatly enhance the improvement and stability of this area.

1. Cut all foods into small bite sized pieces and try to avoid opening your mouth any wider than the thickness of your thumb.
2. Do not eat hard crusts of bread, tough meat, raw vegetables, or any other food that will require prolonged chewing.
3. Do not chew peanuts, ice, or any other substance that is repeatedly milled between your back teeth..
4. Do not chew gum, bite your lip, clench your teeth or habitually chew the insides of your cheeks.
5. Do not thrust your lower jaw forward, as when biting off a piece of thread, applying lipstick, 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 bottom teeth.
8. Make every effort not to strain your jaw joint unnecessarily by such activities as talking excessively, deliberately popping your jaw joint (as one would pop knuckles), leaning on the palm of your hand while reading or watching TV, etc.
9. Avoid holding the phone to 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 occupational, marital or academic stress, and also while trying to fall asleep at night say to yourself "lips together, teeth apart" over and over.
12. Try not to do strenuous work or lift items weighing more than 10 pounds above your waist.
13. Avoid activities that require raising one or both arms over your head (i.e., washing or painting ceilings, reaching for overhead items, sleeping with hands over head, etc.).

These few simple rules can help you avoid stresses and strains on jaw joints, muscles, and ligaments. If the joint area is strained or feels uncomfortable, follow the prescription below:

1. Soft foods ONLY!
2. Apply moist heat (warm wash cloth) to the affected area repeatedly.
3. **Advil:** 400mg every 3 - 4 hours; do not exceed 3200mg in a 24-hour period, and do not continue to take Advil for longer than 4 days in succession.