# TMJ Exercises

Posture

Sit on a straight backed chair. First let your back relax and sit slightly rounded, then sit tall, lifting your chest and use your back muscles to straighten your back, this may arch it (not too much).
Using a rolled up towel behind your low back can offer more support and help maintain this position.
As shown in the picture, sitting tall places your head back on top of the shoulders, and place the jaw in a more mid position, rather than the lower jaw resting forward in the joint.
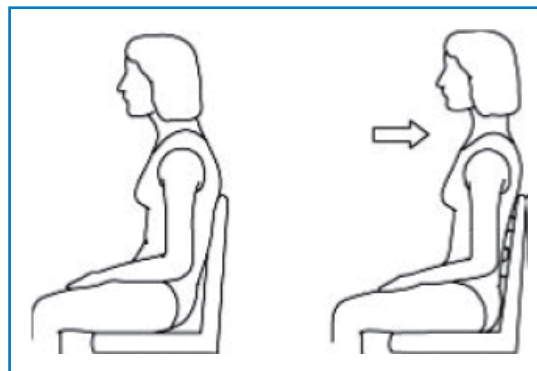
Relaxed Jaw Position

Have the lips together and the teeth slightly apart. Place the tongue as flat as you can on the roof of the mouth as when you say the letter "N" or like "clucking".
Try to breathe through the nose rather than the mouth. Do this regularly to relax the jaw.
You could set an alarm or use an app designed to regularly remind you to improve the jaw position.

Avoiding Clenching ✗   **Relaxed Jaw Position**

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Exercises

Improving Control

1. Place one finger on your jaw joint, to ensure there is no clicking.
2. Place another fingers on your chin and add pressure towards your chin, to avoid pushing your lower jaw forward excessively.
3. Slowly open and close your mouth, aim for the movement to be in a straight line and smooth.
4. Repeat approximately ten times. Try less or more depending upon your symptom response.
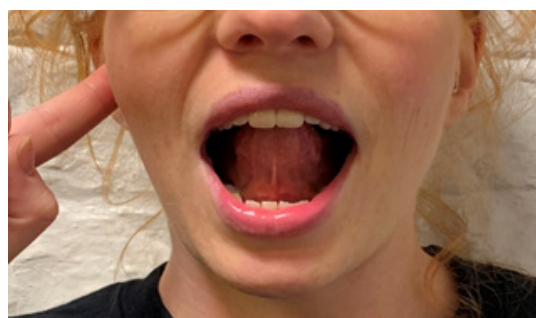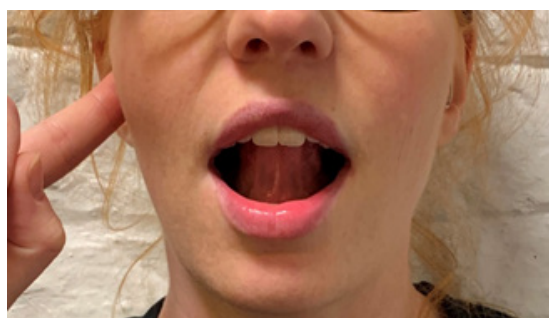

Variations

For some people, placing your tongue on the roof of your mouth can help improve control during this exercise.


To progress from this, remove the finger from your chin. Start with partial and progress to full opening removing finger on your chin.

Isometric Stabilising Exercises

1. Start in the resting jaw position described above.

2. Place your thumb under your chin, try to open your mouth but stop yourself using your thumb. Hold for ten seconds and repeat until fatigue / you feel tired. Repeat 1-3 with your mouth partially open.

3. Place your thumb on the right side of your jaw, try pushing your jaw to the left, and stop yourself using your thumb. Hold for ten seconds and repeat until fatigue / you feel tired. Repeat in the opposite direction.
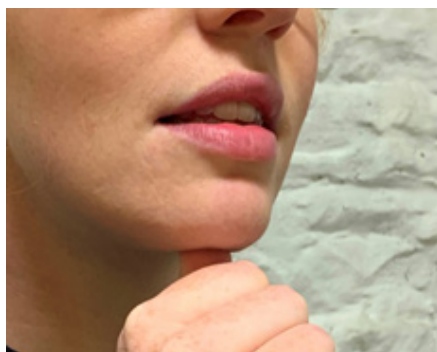
Massage

Facial massage helps to relax and maintain flexibility of the muscles around the jaw and forehead.

1. Use a gentle moisturiser or oil.
2. Massage the jaw/ cheek area, temple region and forehead.
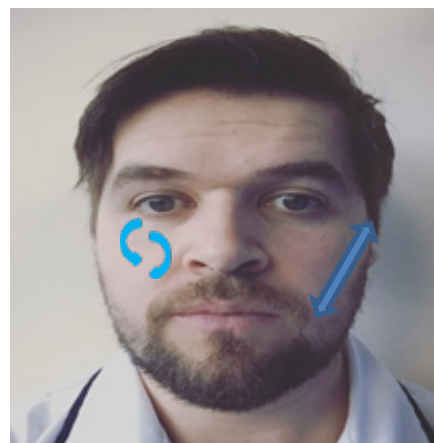3. Perform slow, smooth, circular motions, for approx. 2-5 minutes.

Forehead – circles/ lines vertical/ horizontal

Temporal Massage/ Eye

Cheek

Massage and Stretches for inside the cheek

1. Place your finger, thumb or a spoon inside your mouth, or use your thumb on the inside your mouth and your index finger on the outside (a pincher grip) and push outwards into cheek and the soft tissue ring around your mouth.

2. Perform in scouping motions and push out in the direction of a clock e.g. 1.00, 2.00, 3.00, 4.00, 5.00 o clock.

3. Repeat slowly, 5-10 times, for approx. 5 seconds per motion.

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http://www.cht.nhs.uk/services/clinical-services/physiotherapy-outpatients/patient-careinformation/

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

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MSK Physiotherapy Admin Office

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If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

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