



Postoperative Instructions: TMJ

- 1) Do not eat hard crusts of bread, tough meat, raw vegetables, or any other food that will require prolonged chewing. Stick to soft foods.
- 2) Cut all food into small, bite-sized pieces and try to avoid opening the mouth wide.
- 3) Do not bite any food with the front teeth. Do not chew gum. Do not bite your nails. Do not bite your lower lip.
- 4) If you wear lipstick, do not bring your jaw forward when applying it.
- 5) Avoid protruding your jaw during any other activities: for example, smoking, conversation, resting your jaw on your hand, etc.
- 6) Do not use the telephone with the same ear every time.
- 7) Make every effort not to strain your jaw ligaments unnecessarily.
- 8) If you are wearing a corrective dental splint, do not play with it with your tongue.
- 9) Sleep on your side or back at night. Avoid pressure on your jaw.
- 10) Don't have a pillow under the shoulder when sleeping on your side. Keep your head in the midline. Use the edge and not the center of the pillow.
- 11) Use only feather or shredded Dacron® pillows. No sponge pillows.
- 12) Do not clench or grind your teeth together. Remember to keep your lips together and your teeth slightly apart.
- 13) Tell yourself to relax your jaw whenever you feel your teeth together.
- 14) Try to avoid moving your jaw in such a way that it causes the joint to pop.
- 15) Whenever you feel TMJ pain, ask yourself these questions: What are you doing? What position are you in? What are you thinking about? Then take corrective action.



Postoperative Instructions: TMJ (Cont.)

- 16) Breathe through your nose, not your mouth. The resting position of your tongue should be against the roof of your mouth. Limit the extent of your mouth opening to a thumb's thickness when laughing, singing, and especially when coughing or sneezing.
- 17) When yawning, never open your mouth wider than is possible. That is, do not allow the tip of your tongue to leave the roof of your mouth.
- 18) When blowing your nose, keep your back teeth slightly separated.
- 19) Always maintain good posture, whether sitting, standing, or lying down.
- 20) Avoid heavy lifting, pushing, etc. If possible, avoid stressful situations.
- 21) You may use ice, heat, massage, and other relaxation techniques to help get rid of pain.
- 22) Be cautious of any kissing.