

Kingston Park Dental Practice

1 Stuart Court, Kingston Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2QF
0191 286 3398 info@kpteeth.co.uk
www.KPteeth.co.uk/tmd



Jaw Joint Exercises

The Temporo Mandibular Joint (TMJ) is located in front of each of your ears and allows your lower jaw to move. Your jaw can move in two directions, up and down to open and close your jaw and also forwards and backwards.

Dysfunction of the joint can have various symptoms such as earaches, headaches, pain when opening your mouth or pain from your teeth. For more information visit www.KPteeth.co.uk/TMD

Exercises can help tighten the muscles around your jaw joint to help relax and improve how your jaw functions.

We recommend you set aside two five minute periods each day at a time when you are relaxed - e.g. just before you get up or go to bed. Sit upright to perform all of the following exercise;

1. *Close your mouth and make sure your teeth are touching. Do not 'clench' your teeth. Rest the tip of your tongue on your palate, just behind your upper front teeth.*
2. *Run the tip of your tongue backwards towards your soft palate at the back of your mouth as far back as it will go. Keep your teeth gently together.*
3. *Hold your tongue back in this position to keep contact with the soft part of your palate and slowly open your mouth until you feel your tongue being pulled away. Do not open your mouth any further. Stay in this position for five seconds then close your mouth and relax.*
4. *Repeat this whole procedure slowly but firmly for the next 5 minutes.*

As you open your mouth, you should feel the tension in the back of your neck and under your chin. The first few times you perform the exercise, do it whilst looking in a mirror to check your lower teeth move vertically downwards and do not deviate to one side.

If you are performing the exercise correctly there will be no clicks or noise from your joints. If there is, re-start the exercise and continue practicing, adjusting your position until it is click free.

For the first week, don't do the exercise more than five minutes twice a day. After this week, do the exercises as often as you can. This will help strengthen the ligaments around your jaw and relax the muscles which close your mouth.

You may find the pain is worse for a while at first; this is because you are not used to the movement. Over time, this will subside.

After 2-3 weeks of doing the exercises, you will find that your muscles will be retrained and your jaw should open and close smoothly without any clicking.

The following can make your TMD worse and increase your pain;

- Don't bite your fingernails
- Don't bite your lower lip
- Keep your upper and lower teeth apart when at rest