



Patient Self-Care Measures

HEAT, EXERCISE, ANALGESICS, LIFESTYLE, STRAIN

For Jaw and Muscle Sprain/Strain (JAMSS),
Self-care is a core component of your recovery process.

HEAT, COLD & MASSAGE Apply moist heat and/or cold to reduce pain in tender muscles & joints

Applications of heat and/or ice used up to four times per day can relax the muscles and reduce pain. Generally, moist heat is used for comfort and relaxation and cold is used in the first 24 hours to control swelling. Use what feels best for you.

EXERCISES Do daily stretching and exercises

Gradually increase your jaw range-of-motion by placing two fingers, then three fingers between your front teeth and hold for a count of 10. Perform this stretch four times per day. It's yoga for the jaw. Exercise and stretch your jaw daily with the jaw exercises provided to you (**Jaw Rx-Ercises**). Closely monitor your jaw position during the day (waking hours) so that you maintain your jaw in a relaxed comfortable position.

ANALGESICS Use anti-Inflammatory and pain reducing medications

Short-term use of over-the-counter ibuprofen, naproxen, acetaminophen or aspirin (without caffeine) can reduce joint and muscle pain. It is important to control pain as soon as possible to improve jaw function.

LIFESTYLE Make positive choices to promote healing

- Eat a "pain-free" diet and chew food evenly on both sides; cut food into small pieces.
- Be mindful of proper resting tongue position and maintaining a relaxed jaw throughout the day.
- Avoid stimulating activities in the late evening, including computer work and exercise.
- Get a good night's sleep and wear QuickSplint® temporary oral appliance overnight as directed. Reduce light and noise and lie on a comfortable mattress. Avoid sleeping on your stomach.

STRAIN Reduce muscle-tensing habits & activities that put strain on the jaw

- Clenching and grinding your teeth (bruxism)
- Touching or resting your teeth together
- Biting cheeks, lips, or tongue
- Eating or biting hard or chewy foods
- Chewing gum
- Resting your jaw on your hand
- Straining the jaw when playing a musical instrument
- Pushing the tongue against the teeth
- Tensing your jaw or pushing your jaw forward or to the side
- Opening your mouth too wide or too long when yawning, singing or during dental visits

The proper relaxed posture is Teeth Apart & Tongue Up (TATU). To achieve relaxed posture, position your tongue gently on the roof of the mouth behind your front teeth and let your jaw relax. To find this position, say the letter "N". Let your lips close, your jaw relax forward, and breathe through your nose. Maintain relaxed posture throughout the day.

