

XperPhysio & Sport Injury Centre

Temporomandibular joint disorders (TMD) exercises program

By Jian Zhang, PT

To keep the jaw muscles smooth and supple, you can also perform simple jaw exercises at home. These exercises are to stretch, strengthen and relax the jaw muscles.

Exercise #1: Jaw relaxation

While touching your tongue to the roof of your mouth behind the upper front teeth, open and close your mouth. Repeat 10 times.

Exercise #2: Chin tucks, repeat 10 times

1. Stand tall against a wall.
2. Pull your chin towards the wall to create a double chin.
3. Hold for three to five seconds.
4. Repeat several times.

Exercise #3: Platysma stretching

1. Chin down, put your hand on your chest, and push down and hold tight
2. Bend your head backward as far as you can, and hold for 30 seconds
3. Repeat 6 times though out of the day

Exercise #4: Levator scapulae stretching

1. Turn your head 45 degree to the side, and use your hand to pull your head down, hold for 30 seconds
2. Repeat 6 times though out of the day

Exercise #5: Side-to-side, front-to-back jaw movements, repeat 10 times

1. Put an object, such as a wooden craft stick between your top and bottom front teeth. (or you do not use any object)
2. Slowly move your jaw from side to side while clenching the item between your teeth.
3. Thrust your bottom jaw forward, so the bottom teeth are in front of the top teeth.
4. Gradually increase the thickness of the object as the exercise gets easier to complete.

XperPhysio & Sport Injury Centre

Exercise #6: tongue range of motions, repeat 10 times

1. Open your mouth widely, move your tongue back as far as you can, and hold for five seconds
2. Open your mouth widely, move your tongue back to the side as far as you can, and hold for five seconds
3. Open your mouth widely, move your tongue to the other side as far as you can, and hold for five seconds

Exercise #7: Mouth resistance, repeat 10 times

1. Place your thumb under your chin.
2. While opening your mouth, apply pressure to your chin with your thumb.
3. Hold for three to five seconds before closing your mouth.
4. Do the reverse by applying your fingers on your top and bottom front teeth to resist the mouth closing
5. Gradually increase the thickness of the object as the exercise gets easier to complete.

Exercise #8: Occipital lifts, repeat 10 times

1. Put both of your thumbs behind your ears and below the bones
2. One hand lift your head, the other push down, so your head bends to the side

Exercise #9: actively massage chewing muscles, repeat 10 times

1. Press your knuckles right below your cheekbones
2. Open your mouth widely and close slowly

Exercise #10: Widely open your mouth, chant A E I O U, repeat 10 times

Exercise #11: Massage for a few minutes

1. Massage your temporal muscles
2. Massage your cheek muscles
3. Massage your sub-occipital muscles (right above your neck)