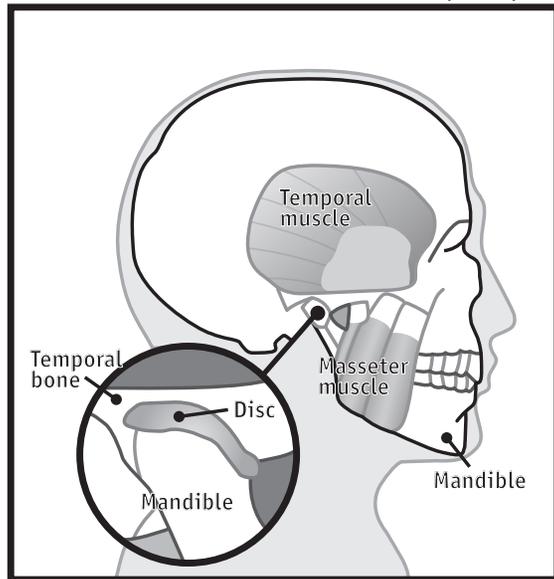


After Arthroscopic Temporomandibular Joint Surgery

Discharge Instructions

Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ)



Important Points

Swelling

- Bruising or swelling is common after surgery. It should improve in 7–10 days.
- For the first 24 hours, you may place an ice pack over the surgical area for 10–20 minutes every 2–3 hours. Ice helps to control bleeding and swelling. **Do not put ice in direct contact with the skin.** A plastic bag with ice cubes or a bag of frozen peas placed in a pillowcase or towel works well.
- After 24 hours, switch to warm moist heat to reduce swelling (use a clean facecloth and warm tap water). Apply for 15 minutes 4 times a day. **Do not use hot water.**
- Sleep or rest with your head raised on two pillows to reduce swelling and bleeding.

Pain

You may have jaw discomfort or ear pain for several days.

- Take pain medications as soon as you begin to feel discomfort.
- Do not wait until you are in pain to take pain medication.
- Take the pain medications **regularly** as ordered by your doctor.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.

Diet

- It will take a few days to resume normal eating. **Remember:** It is important to take plenty of fluids (8 glasses per day) unless your doctor tells you otherwise.
- Begin with small amounts of cool, non-acidic liquids (avoid fruit juices for the first several days). Gradually increase your diet to soft foods (scrambled or poached eggs, pudding, mashed potatoes, pasta, ice cream). Avoid foods that are hard to bite or chew (eg. raw fruit or vegetables) until approved by your surgeon.
- A change in occlusion (bite) may occur after surgery. Avoid excessive chewing (gum), biting hard objects (ice), or opening your mouth too wide (whole apples) until approved by your surgeon.
- **Many pain medications cause constipation.** To prevent this, include high fiber and fluids in your diet, for example: whole grain breads, soft bran cereals, fruits (stewed prunes, raisins, bananas).

Bathing

- Allow the bandaid over the surgical site to fall off. You can apply a thin layer of antibiotic ointment (Polysporin) over the puncture site, twice a day for 3 days.
- You may shower and shampoo, but apply Vaseline or the antibiotic ointment over the puncture site for 3 days before showering.

Exercise

- Exercise your jaw as instructed by your surgeon. See the exercises below.
- If the exercises are uncomfortable, it may help to apply moist heat to the area beforehand and apply ice afterward.
- Do not participate in sports or vigorous exercise until approved by your surgeon.

Follow-Up Appointment

- Contact your doctor's office to arrange a follow-up appointment.

Notify the Doctor or go to the nearest Emergency Department or Urgent Care Centre if any of the following happens:

- Chills, fever, a temperature more than 38.5°C (101.3°F).
- Increased or constant pain that is not relieved by prescribed pain medication.
- Redness and/or drainage(of pus) from the operative site
- Inability to close or open your mouth

Post Operative TMJ Exercises

Stage I

Purpose:

These jaw exercises are designed to increase the movement of your jaw and restore normal function.

Precautions:

The exercises should be done gently, never forcefully, and should not cause excessive pain. If any of the exercises cause undue pain, discontinue them for a short time, then, gradually start them again.

- All exercises should be done 3 times per day, for up to 20 repetitions at a time.
- Exercises should be done slowly and comfortably.
- Allow the jaw to move to the point of tension and light discomfort.
- Do not allow any of the exercises to be done so strongly as to cause sharp pain.

1. Vertical Opening

Tuck your tongue back then place it against the roof of your mouth. Now open your mouth as far as the width of one finger. Gradually progress to the width of two fingers.

2. Right Excursion

Move the jaw to the right side until the teeth line up or midline moves $\frac{1}{2}$ of a tooth.

3. Left Excursion

Same as right

4. Protrusion

Bring the lower jaw forward until lower teeth line up with upper teeth. If your bite already has the teeth lined up with the upper teeth, then move the lower jaw forward 3-4 mm.



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