

ORAL FACIAL SURGERY INSTITUTE



GUIDE TO MANAGING TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT DISORDERS

There are many TMJ treatment options that improve the harmony and function of your jaw. But, in large part, relief hinges on you. The most important role you can play throughout your treatment program (and your lifetime) is resting your jaw, so it can heal and regain stability. Other self-care techniques that may relieve your symptoms are ice, heat, and exercise. At your doctor's direction, you may need to practice these techniques until your symptoms subside, if symptoms flare up in the future, or along with other kinds of treatment. Self-care will help other kinds of treatment to be more effective in resolving your TMJ disorder.

- **REST YOUR JAW.** Make a conscious effort to keep your teeth apart. Avoid clenching or grinding your teeth.
- **EAT ONLY A LIQUID OR SOFT DIET.** Avoid hard foods completely. Do not chew gum. Yogurt, pudding, soup, etc. are good choices.
- **APPLY ICE OR HEAT.** When painful symptoms flare up, cycle ice or heat on your joints. You may alternate according to your response.
- **TAKE MEDICATION AS DIRECTED.** Your doctor may prescribe a muscle relaxant or anti-inflammatory to treat your condition.
- **MAINTAIN YOUR FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS.** Successful treatment sometimes requires a long-term approach. Any questions or problems between appointments may require a phone call. Contact us at any time!