

resolution

PHYSIOTHERAPY & IMS CLINIC

TMJ Dysfunction

The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is located in front of your ear, where your skull and lower jaw meet. Optimal alignment, flexibility and strength are required for the TMJ to perform complex movements when eating, speaking or making facial expressions. Clenching your jaw, poor posture or upper neck dysfunction can lead to increased tension, weakness and imbalance in your jaw and upper neck muscles. Prolonged muscle tension compresses the TMJ and can lead to degenerative changes in this joint. Reduced strength and imbalance of your TMJ muscles can cause your jaw to deviate to one side when opening, which may lead to displacement of a disc which cushions this joint, and will further contribute to degeneration. Common signs of TMJ dysfunction include clicking with opening or closing your mouth, TMJ pain, and headaches. The following exercises help reduce muscle tension and improve strength and co-ordination of your TMJ muscles, leading to easier and more symmetrical joint opening and should reduce pain related to TMJ dysfunction.



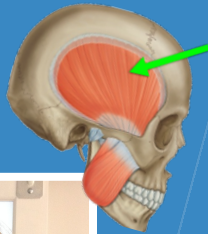
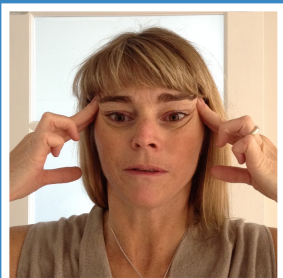
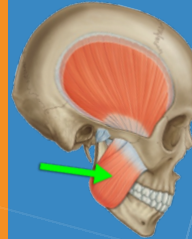
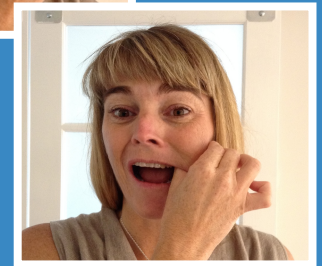
Printable copies of this exercise program and others are available at www.resolutionclinic.com.



Your *success* is our finish line. [resolu+ionclinic.com](http://resolutionclinic.com)

Self Active Release Masseter

The masseter muscle is located in your cheek, above your back upper molars. The masseter tightens when you clench your teeth and will compress your TMJ when tight. To release this muscle, reach your thumb inside your open mouth and squeeze the masseter muscle in between your thumb and index finger. Squeeze and push the muscle laterally (as if you are puffing out your cheeks), then open your mouth without releasing this tension. Open and close your mouth until you feel any tenderness or tension in the masseter muscle reduce. Repeat this twice daily.

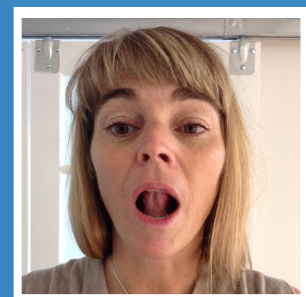


Self Active Release Temporalis

The temporalis muscle is located on the side of your head, tightens when you clench your teeth, and will also compress your TMJ when tight. To release this muscle, push the pads of your index and middle finger into the side of your head at your temples, then push the muscle up towards the top of your head. Hold this pressure as you open and close your mouth, until you feel any tenderness or tension in the temporalis muscle reduce. Repeat this twice daily.

Controlled TMJ Opening

This exercise will improve the symmetry of your jaw movement. While looking in a mirror, push your tongue into the roof of your mouth just behind your upper front teeth, then slowly open your mouth as far as you can while keeping your chin centered and feel no pain or clicking. Repeat this movement 10 times, twice daily. You can progress and open further, removing your tongue from the roof of your mouth, as long as you stay centered, it is painfree, and there is no clicking.



The goal of the above exercises is to reduce your TMJ pain. If you perform these exercises as directed and you do not experience relief within 2 weeks, you may have upper cervical spine involvement or more complicated TMJ dysfunction, which would benefit from assessment and treatment by one of our experienced Physiotherapists.

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