

Three Jaw Exercises

1. Rotation

- Gently put your tongue on the top of your mouth where you say “n”.
- Monitor the position of your TMJs by placing your index fingers over these joints.
- Open and close your mouth, slowly, stopping if you feel the condyle (“ball”) of the joint(s) move forward against your fingers. Do not allow your tongue to leave the roof of your mouth.
- Chewing in this shortened range is often helpful. Take smaller bites if necessary.
- This exercise should require you to open about two finger widths, not more.

2. Relaxation

- Let your jaw relax (i.e. Drop/sag jaw). Do not try to actively open your mouth, just let your jaw relax.
- Take a slow, deep breath as you push the inside of your fingers or palm of your hand gently, but firmly against your jaw muscle. The force you use should not be painful.
- Pull down gently as you let your fingers and/or palm of your hand slide slowly down along your jaw muscles and at the same time let your breath out slowly.
- You can repeat this whenever your jaw feels tense. You can also do this exercise on any muscle you find tight. This included the jaw muscles over your temples.

3. Stretch

- Place one finger between your teeth for one minute. Rest. Repeat.
- Then place two fingertips between your teeth for one minute. Rest. Repeat.
 - i. *Note:* Initially you can rest your fingertips on your upper and lower front teeth to do this stretch. After you have “mastered” relaxing your jaw, you may get a better stretch if you relax your jaw and do the stretch without touching your fingertips to the lower teeth. In the latter situation, it is up to you if you touch your upper teeth with your fingers but try not to touch the lower teeth.
- Do not stretch your jaw more than two fingertips width.

General Notes:

- Do 3-4 times a day. Spread sessions out over the day.
- This is most effective and useful after you notice yourself clenching or tensing your jaw.
- It is often useful to use cold/ice or moist heat treatments before and/or after the above exercises.