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Yeovil District Hospital   
NHS Foundation Trust

## **EXERCISE TO PREVENT CLICKING OF THE JAW JOINT**

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*Physiotherapy Department*

## **EXERCISE**

This exercise should be carried out sitting in an erect posture in front of the mirror. It should be performed before meals and at bedtime, ie, four times a day. Once you are used to the exercise you can stop using the mirror and carry out the exercise as often as possible.

- 1 With the mouth closed and the teeth lightly touching, place your tongue on the roof of your mouth as far back as possible.
- 2 You will feel tension in the muscles at the base of the tongue, below the chin and in front of your ears, ie, over the jaw joints.
- 3 Open your jaw as wide as is comfortable keeping your tongue touching the roof of your mouth.
- 4 You should see your jaw moving like a hinge going up and down. If you see movement to the left or right, or forwards you are not doing the exercise properly. Check that you are keeping the tongue touching the roof of the mouth. Keep practising, it does get easier.
- 5 Gradually increase the amount your mouth opens until you can move to a normal extent without producing a click.

**DO NOT** be tempted to make your jaw click by doing “funny movements”.

You should carry out these exercises for approximately six weeks to achieve maximum benefit. After this, you will be reassessed to see if you need to continue with them.

## **DIET**

During the initial training time, you should be careful with the type of food you eat. Try to eat soft foods that do not require a lot of chewing. Cut larger food items into smaller pieces to avoid straining the jaw. Please avoid chewing gum.

## **POSTURE**

You may be advised to avoid certain postures, ie, leaning on your arm with your hand under your chin. You may be given general posture advice.

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