

## Promenade Complete Dental Center

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### TMJ Homecare

- ❖ Eating soft foods such as yogurt, eggs, cereal, oatmeal, etc. to give your joints a rest. Avoid hard, crunchy foods (raw vegetables, chips, nuts, etc.), chewy foods (hard rolls, bagels, gum), and large foods that force you to open your mouth wide (hamburgers, big sandwiches, etc.).
- ❖ Moist heat or cold packs – if both are used, apply ice first, then do gentle stretching as directed by your doctor, and apply heat. You can make your own heating pack by either wetting a washcloth or towel and microwaving it, or putting rice in a tube sock and microwaving that.
- ❖ Take medications – try over-the-counter medications such as ibuprofen or Naproxen (PLEASE NOTE: Most, if not all medications have the potential to produce side-effects. Please ensure you exercise caution when taking any medication and if you experience any side-effects, you should stop taking the medication immediately and seek professional help. Always read the label and use medication only as directed.)
- ❖ Avoid yawning widely, resting your chin on your hand, resting the phone on your shoulder, or excessive talking.
- ❖ Do not sleep on your side-this stretches the muscles
- ❖ Be aware of clenching and grinding – try to keep your lips together and teeth apart. This will become a habit.
- ❖ Try to avoid situations which are known to cause you to feel stressed or emotionally traumatized, since this can exacerbate symptoms (many people clench or grind their teeth when under stress). Some people go through stressful situations prior to developing TMJ disorder, but there is definitely a physiological factor involved as well.
- ❖ Gentle exercise, relaxation techniques, and meditation are helpful with pain. There are many websites and books that can help teach you these techniques. Some patients found that:
  - Yoga or Pilates are helpful as well
  - Proper sleep and diet. You would be surprised how much proper sleep and diet helps with pain.
  - Depriving your body of much needed sleep can have negative effects