

Jaw Disorders (TMJ)

DNA Health Report

REPORT CATEGORIES —



JOINT & TENDON
HEALTH



DENTAL & MOUTH
HEALTH

Sample Client

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Table of Contents

03 How this works

- 04 Impact
- 05 Evidence
- 06 Some things to keep in mind

07 Introduction

08 Your genetics

09 Your recommendations

DISCLAIMER

This report does not diagnose this or any other health conditions. Please talk to a healthcare professional if this condition runs in your family, you think you might have this condition, or you have any concerns about your results.

Personal information

NAME

Sample Client

SEX AT BIRTH

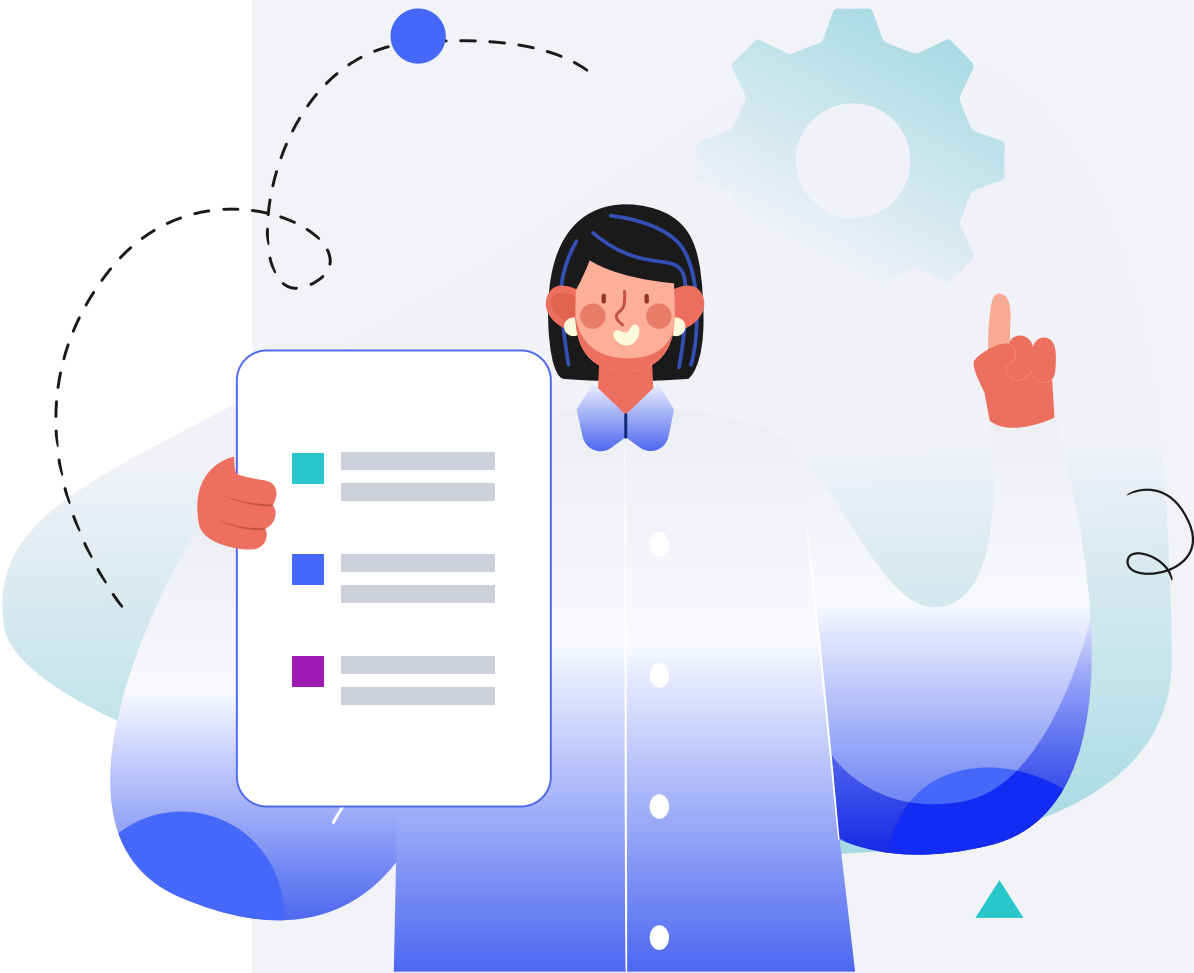
Male

HEIGHT

5ft 5" 165cm

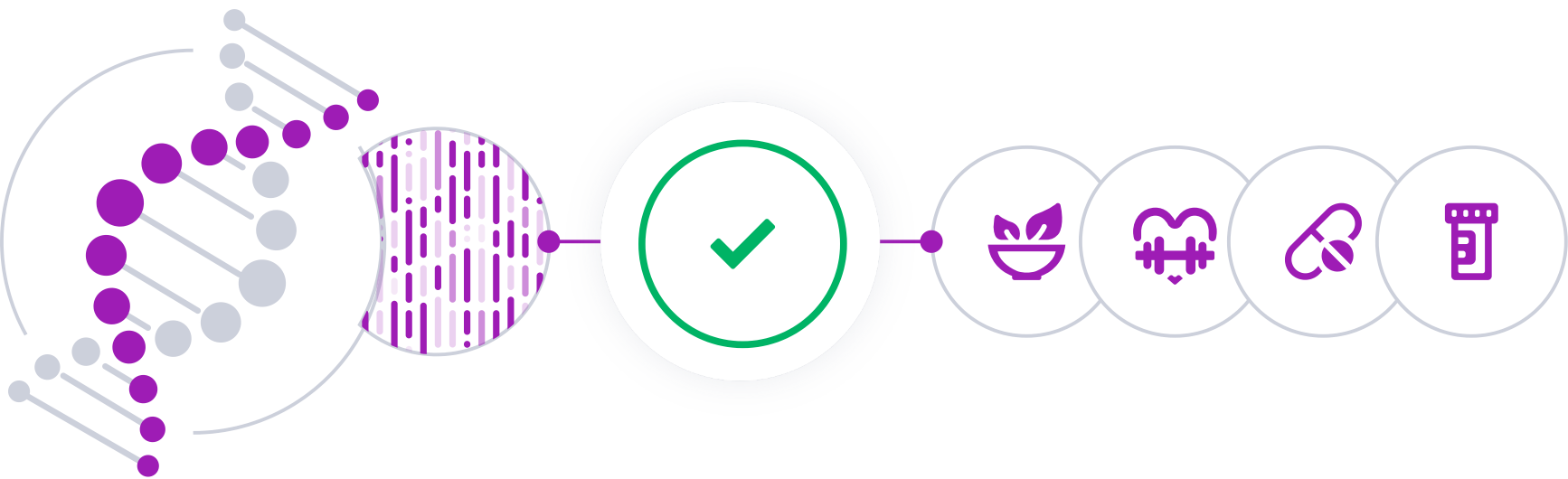
WEIGHT

137lb 62kg



How this works

Our Wellness Reports analyze how your DNA influences your health.
We then use this analysis to give you personalized risk estimates and recommendations.

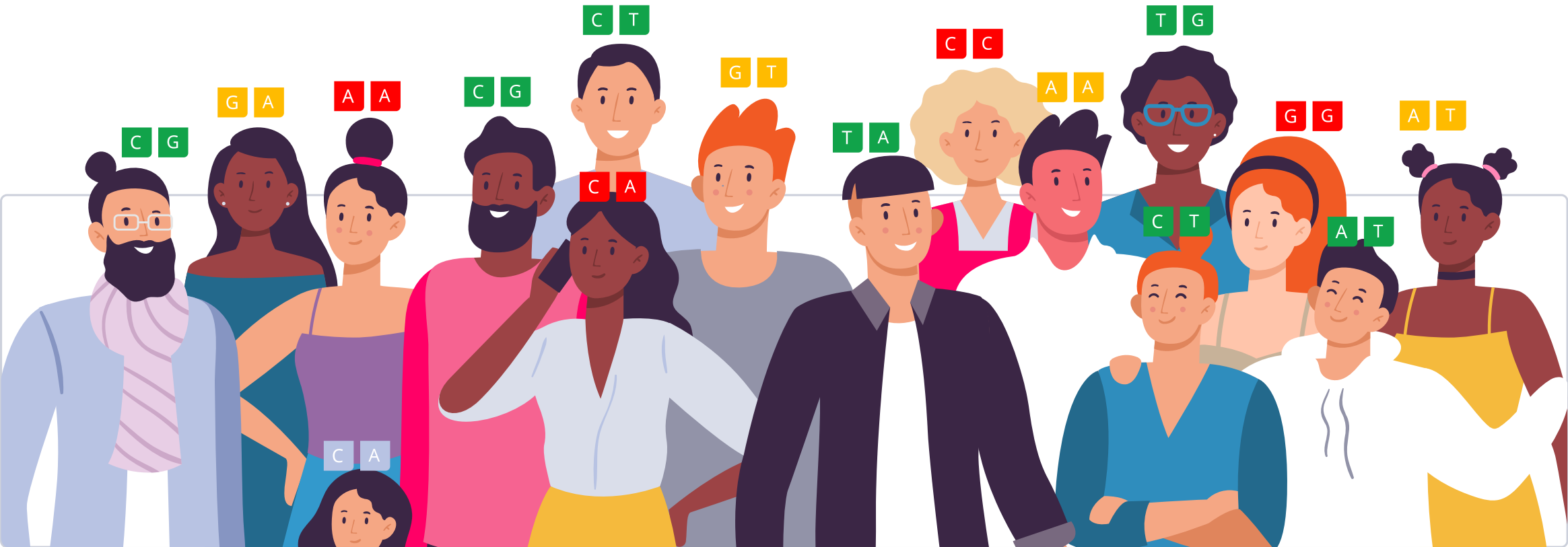


Similarly, our Trait Reports look at how your DNA influences your traits.



Your DNA is like an instruction manual — it contains a lot of information.
You can think of it as a blueprint for your body.

Genetic variants are parts of DNA that differ from person to person. Some can make you more vulnerable to certain health issues, while others may influence traits such as eye color.



We use artificial intelligence and machine learning to analyze all this information.
We then summarize your results as a risk score or display it on a gauge.

In total, we analyze up to 83 million genetic variants.

When we give a risk score, the risk icon tells you if you are at a higher or lower risk compared to other people:



Genotype color info:

AA

You don't have any risk alleles

AA

You have 1 risk allele

AA

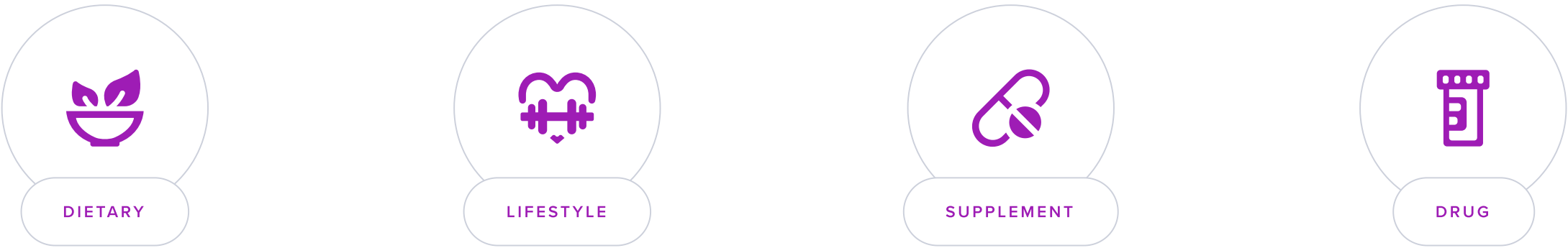
You have 2 risk alleles

Your risk is also displayed as a percentile. This will tell you how your risks compare to our sample population. The lower your percentile number, the lower your risk. The "50th percentile" would be an average risk.

Similarly, the gauge tells you your relative risk score compared to our sample population, or it indicates a specific trait or haplotype you are more likely to have based on your genetic variants.

When applicable, we also list top evidence-based recommendations that may help lower your risk. The focus is on recommendations that may be of benefit to you, based on your genetics.

Our recommendations come in four categories: lifestyle, diet, supplements and drugs.
The following icons tell you which category a recommendation falls into:



Our team of scientists also ranks each recommendation.
We rank based on impact and the strength of evidence in the medical literature.

Impact shows how strongly a recommendation will affect your health in a certain area.
Evidence is how much scientific support there is for the recommendation. Rankings are from 1 to 5 (low to high):



Impact

Impact scores range from 1-5. These scores reflect how much of an effect each recommendation can have. An impact score of 5 predicts the biggest effect.

When a recommendation affects something we can measure, we use those measurements to assign the impact score. For example, a recommendation that decreases cholesterol by 20% will have a higher impact score than one that decreases it by 5%.

Some recommendations affect things that we cannot directly measure, like stress or mood. For these, the impact score is based on how well they work relative to other recommendations and standard treatments. The best ones get the highest scores.

If there is a lot of research that shows a recommendation works especially well for your genotype, the impact score gets increased.

Recommendation Evidence

- 5 / 5
- Recommendations that are considered effective and generally recommended by experts and medical bodies.
-
- 4 / 5
- Recommendations that are considered likely effective and that have multiple independent meta-analyses and a great many studies supporting them.
-
- 3 / 5
- Recommendations that are considered possibly effective and have many studies supporting them
-
- 2 / 5
- Recommendations that have insufficient evidence, with two or several clinical trials supporting them, or many studies but with ambiguous results.
-
- 1 / 5
- Recommendations that have insufficient evidence, with a single clinical trial, or with many studies most of which didn't find support for the recommendation.
-
- 0 / 5
- No evidence in humans.

Genotype-specific Evidence

- High-quality
- Direct evidence that a recommendation helps more in people with your gene variant (many clinical trials, a few large clinical trials, or a meta-analysis).
-
- Medium-quality
- Direct evidence that a recommendation helps more in people with your gene variant (a few clinical trials or one large clinical trial).
-
- Low-quality
- Direct evidence that a recommendation helps more in people with your gene variant (a single clinical trial or more trials with inconsistent results).
-
- Indirect
- A recommendation may help more in people with your gene variant because it targets a specific gene or protein affected by your variant (e.g., MTHFR, dopamine).
-
- In theory
- A recommendation may help more in people with your gene variant because it targets a specific mechanism affected by your variant (e.g., inflammation, oxidative stress).

Some things to keep in mind:

- Genetics doesn’t play a considerable role in a condition or a trait.
- There is not enough research available to estimate a genetic predisposition.
- There are technical limitations to estimating or presenting a genetic predisposition.
- The topic is sensitive, and a genetic predisposition should only be estimated and presented by a healthcare professional.

Introduction

TMJ stands for *temporomandibular joint*. It is the joint that connects your jawbone to your skull.

TMJ disorders (TMDs) are a group of various disorders with **jaw pain** as a common symptom. They are fairly common, affecting up to 30% of adults [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Potential causes of jaw pain include **arthritis, injury, teeth grinding**, and more. Besides jaw pain, signs and symptoms of TMJ disorders include [\[R\]](#):

- Jaw tension and discomfort
- Ear or facial pain
- Difficulty chewing
- Popping or clicking jaw sounds

Treatment for TMJ disorders can vary depending on the cause and severity of the condition. It may include medication, physical therapy, or in more severe cases, surgery [\[R\]](#).

Risk Factors and Genetics

Key Takeaways:

- Genetics plays a role in factors that contribute to TMJ disorders, such as arthritis or teeth grinding. These genes may affect bone and cartilage structure, and mental health.
- Factors that may increase the risk of developing TMJ disorders include arthritis, jaw injury, teeth grinding or clenching, and connective tissue problems.
- TMJ disorders are common, affecting up to **30%** of adults.
- If you are at high genetic risk or have potential risk factors, take action now to help reduce the overall risk. If you have symptoms, talk to your healthcare professional.

Factors that may increase the risk of developing TMJ disorders include [\[R\]](#):

- Arthritis
- Jaw injury
- Teeth grinding or clenching
- Connective tissue problems
- Genetics**

Genetics plays a role in different factors that contribute to TMJ disorders, such as arthritis or teeth grinding. Depending on the underlying cause, involved genes may affect **bone and cartilage structure, mental health**, and more [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).



MORE LIKELY

More likely to have a TMJ disorder based on 17,327 genetic variants we looked at



Your top variants that most likely impact your genetic predisposition:

GENE	SNP	GENOTYPE
BAHCC1	rs1531554	CC
RXFP2	rs60249166	TC
DRD1	rs686	GA
DRD5	rs6283	CT
HTR2A	rs2770304	CT
ANKK1	rs1800497	GA
HTR2A	rs6313	GA
EPHA5	rs201194999	CC
COL11A1	rs2622873	TT
ICA1L	rs62182810	AA
SFRP1	rs10092633	GG
SP4	rs73271865	CC
DMD	rs73460075	G
SGCA	rs4794106	CC
TSPAN9	rs878962	TT
DRD3	rs6280	TT
PARD6G	rs1039257158	CC
SCUBE1	rs528981060	GG
SLC39A8	rs13107325	CC
TGFB1	rs75621460	GG
TGFA	rs3771501	GG
H4C8	rs115740542	TT

The number of "risk" variants in this table doesn't necessarily reflect your overall result.

Your Recommendations

Your recommendations are prioritized according to the likelihood of it having an impact for you based on your genetics, along with the amount of scientific evidence supporting the recommendation.

You’ll likely find common healthy recommendations at the top of the list because they are often the most impactful and most researched.

DOSAGE		DOSAGE	
1	Reduce Jaw Strain	2	Psychotherapy1 hour
3	Physical Therapy30 minutes	4	Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS)30 minutes
5	Low-Level Laser Therapy (LLLT)30 seconds	6	TMJ Splints
7	Sleep for 7+ Hours	8	Biofeedback
9	Relaxation Techniques30 minutes	10	Glucosamine1500 mg
11	Acupuncture1 hour	12	Breathing Techniques10 minutes
13	Osteopathic Manipulation	14	Lavender Oil Aromatherapy2 drops
15	Deep Breathing5 minutes	16	Topical CBD
17	Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA)	18	PEMF30 minutes
19	Mindful Eating	20	Mouthguards
21	Apply Heat15 minutes	22	Manual Therapy
23	Jaw Exercises10 minutes	24	Exercise Therapy1 hour

1



Reduce Jaw Strain

IMPACT

4 / 5

EVIDENCE

4 / 5

How to implement

Avoid chewing gum, biting on hard foods like nuts or ice, and lengthy yawning. Practice relaxation techniques to reduce tension in the jaw, such as mindfulness or mild jaw stretching exercises, avoiding overextension. Implement these practices daily for ongoing jaw health.

Description

Jaw strain happens when jaw muscles are exposed to powerful contractions or repetitive use of the jaw. When the muscles can’t handle the stress, it can lead to tearing of muscle fibers. Reducing jaw strain may involve avoiding excessive clenching or grinding of teeth, which can lead to temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders. Proper dental care and stress management techniques can also contribute to reducing jaw strain.

Jaw strain happens when jaw muscles are exposed to powerful contractions or repetitive use of the jaw. When the muscles can’t handle the stress, it can lead to tearing of muscle fibers.

The following activities may increase jaw strain [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Teeth grinding or clenching
- Biting lips or fingernails
- Eating hard and chewy foods

How it helps

Some activities increase jaw strain and may thus contribute to TMJ disorders. Examples include [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Teeth grinding or clenching
- Lip biting
- Leaning on the chin
- Biting fingernails
- Eating hard and chewy foods

Even though the causal role of these activities in TMJ disorders is uncertain, experts recommend avoiding them [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Counseling and **habit reversal therapy** may help you identify and get rid of habits that put strain on your jaw [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Having a bad bite (malocclusion) may also contribute to TMJ disorders. It may be a good idea to **visit your dentist** if you suspect a bad bite or other jaw problems [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

2



Psychotherapy

IMPACT

3 / 5

EVIDENCE

4 / 5

How to implement

Schedule and attend regular sessions with a licensed psychotherapist, typically once a week for 50-60 minutes, over a period of several months to years depending on your individual needs and progress. Consistency is key, and the duration can vary widely based on personal goals and the type of psychotherapy being practiced.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

1 hour

Description

Psychotherapy is a broad term for therapeutic approaches that address mental and emotional health issues through talking and counseling. It can be used to treat a wide range of psychological and emotional challenges.

Psychotherapy (talk therapy) involves talking about your health with a licensed therapist. It may improve the way you react to certain experiences and help reduce stress [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Psychotherapy is a great way to improve many conditions, including [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Depression
- Anxiety disorders
- PTSD
- OCD
- Weight problems
- Eating disorders

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of psychotherapy. CBT aims to change the way you think about your life and yourself. Through CBT, a therapist can help you develop healthy coping mechanisms [\[R\]](#).

How it helps

Many people with TMJ disorders are also dealing with **stress, anxiety**, and other mental health problems. For this reason, experts say psychotherapy is an important part of the treatment plan [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Psychotherapy may also help people identify and get rid of habits that put strain on the jaw, such as teeth grinding [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

As a result, psychotherapy may improve pain and mental health in people with TMJ disorders. Potential options include [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Education and counseling
- Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Habit reversal therapy

3

Physical Therapy

IMPACT

3 / 5

EVIDENCE

4 / 5

How to implement

Attend physical therapy sessions 2-3 times per week for a duration of 4-6 weeks, depending on your specific condition and the advice of your healthcare provider. Each session typically lasts about 30-60 minutes, where a licensed therapist will guide you through targeted exercises, stretches, and possibly other treatments like electrical stimulation or ultrasound therapy.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

Physical therapy is a therapeutic practice focused on optimizing physical function and mobility through specialized exercises, manual techniques, and therapeutic modalities. It helps individuals recover from injuries, manage chronic conditions, and improve overall physical well-being by enhancing strength, flexibility, and pain management.

Physical therapy (physiotherapy) helps people regain or maintain their ability to move [\[R\]](#).

Physical therapy can involve [\[R\]](#):

- Joint or muscle exercises
- Corrective movements
- Massage
- Education and advice

People mainly use physical therapy to help with [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Pain and injury
- Stroke recovery
- Chronic health conditions
- Headaches

Mirror therapy uses a mirror placed between the arms or legs. The image of a moving arm or leg gives the illusion of normal movement in the affected one. This therapy stimulates different brain regions and aims to improve mobility [\[R\]](#).

Constraint-induced movement therapy is another type of physical therapy. It consists of restraining the healthy leg or arm to increase the use of the affected one [\[R\]](#).

How it helps

As part of physical therapy, the following may help with TMJ disorders [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Exercise therapy
- Massage and manual therapy
- Applying heat or cold
- Biofeedback
- Laser therapy
- Electrotherapy
- Ultrasound

If you think you might benefit from physical therapy for TMJ disorders, please consult a licensed therapist.

4

Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS)

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Apply TENS unit electrode pads around the area in pain; begin with the device set to a low setting and gradually increase intensity to a comfortable level. Use the device for 15-30 minutes per session for pain relief, and it can be used multiple times a day as needed.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

TENS is a therapy that uses low-level electrical currents to relieve pain by stimulating the nerves. It's commonly used as a non-invasive method to manage various types of pain, such as musculoskeletal pain or chronic pain conditions.

How it helps

TENS may reduce pain and improve mouth opening in people with temporomandibular joint disorders. However, low-level laser therapy may be more effective [\[R, R, R\]](#).

5

Low-Level Laser Therapy (LLLT)

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Use a low-level laser therapy device, as directed by its manual or a healthcare professional, on the affected area. Generally, treatment involves applying the laser for a specified duration, often between 30 seconds to several minutes, per treatment area. Sessions can be conducted 2-3 times per week for a period of 4-12 weeks, depending on the condition being treated and the device used.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 seconds

Description

Low-level laser therapy (LLLT), also known as photobiomodulation, is a type of light therapy that uses low-intensity lasers to promote healing. It has been shown to be effective in treating a variety of conditions, including pain, inflammation, and wound healing.

How it helps

Low-Level Laser Therapy (LLLT) can help with TMJ disorders by reducing inflammation and promoting tissue regeneration in the jaw area. It can also provide pain relief by blocking the pain signals transmitted to your brain.

Several systematic reviews and meta-analyses evaluated low-level laser therapy (LLLT) for treating temporomandibular disorders (TMD). A 2011 review found no evidence supporting LLLT's effectiveness. In 2015, a meta-analysis showed that LLLT was not better than placebo for reducing chronic TMD pain but improved functional outcomes. In 2018, another review indicated that LLLT reduced pain intensity and increased interincisal opening for temporomandibular myofascial pain. A 2021 network meta-analysis recommended d1 laser therapy for short-term pain management. In 2022, LLLT with wavelengths ranging from 910-1100 nm was found more effective than TENS. A 2023 review suggested diode or GaAlAs lasers with specific parameters for different TMD types [\[R, R, R, R, R, R, R\]](#).

6



TMJ Splints

IMPACT

3 / 5

EVIDENCE

3 / 5

How to implement

Wear the TMJ splint as directed by your dental specialist, typically during sleep every night and possibly during the day if recommended. It's essential to follow up regularly with the specialist to adjust the splint as needed and evaluate the progress.

Description

TMJ splints, or temporomandibular joint splints, are dental devices used to manage temporomandibular joint disorders. They help alleviate jaw pain, reduce teeth grinding, and improve overall jaw function.

TMJ splints are mouth devices that protect the teeth and help align the jaw. They include night guards and some more complex types worn daily [\[R\]](#).

TMJ splints are often custom-made by dentists for a perfect fit. However, stock guards or adjustable over-the-counter options are also available [\[R\]](#).

How it helps

Experts say that some people with TMJ disorders may benefit from wearing a splint. TMJ splints are specifically designed to help these people [\[R, R, R, R, R, R, R\]](#):

- Improve bad bite
- Relax the jaw muscles
- Relieve jaw pain

The two main types of TMJ splints are **occluding** and **non-occluding** splints. Occluding splints are more complex and usually custom-made. If you need a TMJ splint, your doctor or dentist will help you choose the right type [\[R\]](#).

Combining splints with counseling therapy may increase their effectiveness [\[R, R, R, R\]](#).

7

Sleep for 7+ Hours

IMPACT2 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Ensure you allocate enough time in your schedule to achieve a minimum of 7 hours of sleep each night. This might involve going to bed earlier or adjusting your evening routine to promote relaxation and make it easier to fall asleep.

Description

Optimizing sleep involves adopting healthy sleep habits and creating a sleep-conducive environment to ensure restorative and sufficient sleep duration. It supports cognitive function, mood stability, and overall physical health. Most experts recommend getting **at least 7 hours of good-quality sleep each night**.

[Sleep](#) supports your body and mind [\[R, R\]](#). More precisely, sleep helps:

- Support brain health [\[R, R\]](#)
- Maintain a healthy weight and appetite [\[R, R, R\]](#)
- Regulate blood pressure [\[R, R\]](#)
- Balance blood sugar [\[R, R\]](#)

Ways to sleep better include [\[R\]](#):

- Reducing your bright light exposure (screen time) in the evenings
- Sticking to a regular sleep schedule
- Avoiding hunger or large meals before bed
- Avoiding nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol before bed
- Maintaining a sleep area that’s cool, dark, and quiet

How it helps

TMJ disorders (TMDs) may be **4.5 times** more common in people with poor sleep quality. For this reason, some researchers suggest addressing sleep quality as part of TMDs management [\[R\]](#).

8



Biofeedback

IMPACT2 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Attend biofeedback sessions once or twice a week for about 8 to 10 weeks. During these sessions, a therapist will guide you through exercises to control different body functions, such as heart rate or muscle tension, using monitors that provide feedback on your physiological state. Practice the techniques learned during sessions at home daily to improve symptoms and manage your condition.

Description

Biofeedback is a type of therapy that teaches people how to control certain body functions, such as heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension. It can be used to treat a variety of conditions, including stress, anxiety, and chronic pain.

Biofeedback is a kind of “**brain training**” in which sensors are attached to your body. They detect information like your heart rate, temperature, and breathing rate. By seeing this information, you may be better able to control these functions [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Biofeedback is used to help with [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Gut problems
- Chronic pain
- Migraines
- Insomnia
- Attention

[Neurofeedback](#) is a form of biofeedback that measures brain activity in real time [\[R\]](#).

How it helps

Biofeedback may help people with TMJ disorders **relax their jaw muscles** by monitoring their tightness. It may help alone or in combination with relaxation techniques [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

9



Relaxation Techniques

IMPACT

2 / 5

EVIDENCE

2 / 5

How to implement

Incorporate relaxation techniques such as deep breathing exercises, meditation, or yoga into your daily routine. Spend at least 15-30 minutes each day practicing one of these techniques, preferably in a quiet, comfortable space without interruptions.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

Relaxation techniques encompass various methods like deep breathing, yoga, meditation, and progressive muscle relaxation, aimed at reducing stress and promoting mental and physical relaxation. Practicing these techniques regularly can help manage stress, improve mental clarity, and enhance overall emotional well-being.

We all get stressed from time to time.

[Stress](#) can help you deal with a challenge or avoid danger. However, **it’s not healthy to be stressed for a long time** [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Relaxation techniques such as [yoga](#) and [meditation](#) can relieve stress in different ways. Most of them focus on breathing and help you get rid of negative thoughts and emotions [\[R\]](#).

People use relaxation techniques to improve conditions like [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Chronic pain

Progressive muscle relaxation is another relaxation technique. In this technique, you focus on tensing and relaxing different parts of your body. It is common to start with the toes and slowly work your way up to the neck and head [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Autogenic training is a relaxation technique that a person may carry out on their own. It uses exercises that take the mind’s attention to bodily sensations such as warmth and heaviness [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

How it helps

Many people with TMJ disorders are also dealing with **stress, anxiety, and mood problems**. For this reason, some experts suggest addressing mental health and practicing relaxation techniques such as **deep breathing** [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Relaxation techniques may help reduce stress and improve jaw pain and mouth opening [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

10



Glucosamine

IMPACT

2 / 5

EVIDENCE

2 / 5

How to implement

Take glucosamine as a dietary supplement, commonly available in capsules or liquid form. The standard dose is 1500 mg per day, which can be taken all at once or divided into multiple doses throughout the day. It's often recommended to continue taking glucosamine for at least 3 to 4 months to evaluate its effectiveness in relieving joint pain or osteoarthritis symptoms.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

1500 mg

Description

Glucosamine is a supplement commonly used to support joint health and may help alleviate symptoms of osteoarthritis. It's believed to promote cartilage health and reduce joint discomfort, but individual responses can vary.

[Glucosamine](#) is a compound naturally made by the body. It helps keep the connective tissues, such as the cartilage in the joints, strong and elastic [\[R\]](#).

Many people use glucosamine supplements to support joint health [\[R, R, R\]](#).

How it helps

In people with TMJ osteoarthritis, glucosamine (700-1,500 mg/day for 3-12 months) may [\[R, R, R, R, R\]](#):

- Reduce pain and inflammation
- Reduce joint noise
- Improve joint function

Glucosamine may help by repairing the joint cartilage. However, it's not sure if glucosamine helps with TMJ disorders other than arthritis [\[R, R\]](#).

11



Acupuncture

IMPACT

2 / 5

EVIDENCE

2 / 5

How to implement

Visit a licensed acupuncturist for a session, typically lasting between 30 to 60 minutes, once or twice a week. Depending on your specific condition, a course of treatment might range from a few weeks to several months.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

1 hour

Description

Acupuncture is a part of traditional Chinese medicine. It involves inserting thin needles at specific points on the body. People use it to relieve pain and allergies, as well as reduce nausea and improve sleep.

[Acupuncture](#) is a part of traditional Chinese medicine. It involves **inserting thin needles at specific points on the body**. People use it to [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Relieve pain
- Improve sleep quality
- Relieve allergies
- Reduce nausea

How it helps

According to limited evidence, acupuncture may reduce pain in people with TMJ disorders. It may help by blocking pain signals [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Please note: *Acupuncture is generally safe for most people. However, it may come with extra risks for pregnant women, people with pacemakers, and people with bleeding disorders. Consult your doctor or a licensed acupuncturist for more information* [\[R\]](#).

12



Breathing Techniques

IMPACT

1 / 5

EVIDENCE

1 / 5

How to implement

Practice deep breathing exercises for 10 minutes daily, preferably in a quiet space where you won't be disturbed. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position, slowly inhale through your nose, allowing your chest and lower belly to rise, hold the breath for a moment, and then exhale slowly through your mouth or nose. This can be done at any time of day to reduce stress and improve focus.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

10 minutes

Description

Breath awareness and specific breathing techniques, such as deep breathing or mindfulness-based practices, can help reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance overall mental well-being. These techniques are valuable tools for managing anxiety and promoting relaxation.

Most breathing techniques involve taking slow and even breaths. Their main goal is to prevent rapid breathing (**hyperventilation**) [\[R\]](#).

Breathing techniques tend to help with [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Sleep problems
- Asthma

One example is the **Buteyko breathing technique**. It's often used by people with asthma or other conditions that affect the lungs [\[R\]](#).

Another example is **yogic breathing**. [Yoga](#) is a practice that combines breathing techniques with exercise and meditation [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

How it helps

Many people with TMJ disorders are also dealing with **stress, anxiety, and mood problems**. For this reason, some experts suggest addressing mental health and practicing relaxation techniques such as **deep breathing** [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Relaxation techniques may help reduce stress and improve jaw pain and mouth opening [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

13



Osteopathic Manipulation

IMPACT

1 / 5

EVIDENCE

1 / 5

How to implement

Schedule an appointment with a licensed osteopathic physician (DO) who specializes in osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT). Initially, you might need to go for treatment once a week for 4-6 weeks, depending on your condition's severity and response to treatment. After the initial period, the frequency may be reduced based on your physician's advice.

Description

Osteopathic manipulation is a hands-on medical approach used by osteopathic physicians to diagnose, treat, and prevent medical conditions. It involves techniques like stretching, pressure, and resistance to support musculoskeletal health and overall well-being.

Osteopathic manipulation involves applying pressure to different parts of the body. A practitioner will move your muscles and joints to relieve pain and other health issues [\[R\]](#).

How it helps

According to limited evidence, osteopathic manipulation may improve pain and other symptoms of TMJ disorders. It may help by relieving muscle tension [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

14



Lavender Oil Aromatherapy

IMPACT

1 / 5

EVIDENCE

1 / 5

How to implement

Place 2-3 drops of lavender essential oil in a diffuser filled with water. Use the diffuser in your bedroom or workspace for 30-60 minutes, especially before bedtime or during periods of stress.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE
2 drops

Description

Lavender oil aromatherapy involves inhaling the soothing scent of lavender essential oil. It is used to promote relaxation, reduce anxiety, and improve overall mental well-being.

How it helps

In a placebo-controlled trial of 91 patients with jaw disorders, aromatherapy massage with lavender oil was effective in the management of pain and limited mouth opening [\[R\]](#).

Lavender oil is known for its relaxation and stress-relieving properties.

15



Deep Breathing

IMPACT

1 / 5

EVIDENCE

1 / 5

How to implement

Practice deep breathing exercises for 5-10 minutes at least twice a day, ideally in the morning and before bed. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position, slowly inhale through your nose, allowing your chest and lower belly to rise, hold the breath for a moment, and then exhale slowly through your mouth or nose.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

5 minutes

Description

Deep breathing techniques, such as diaphragmatic or abdominal breathing, can promote relaxation, reduce stress, and improve lung capacity. Regular deep breathing exercises can contribute to overall mental and physical well-being by reducing tension and increasing oxygen supply to the body.

How it helps

Many people with TMJ disorders are also dealing with **stress, anxiety, and mood problems**. For this reason, some experts suggest addressing mental health and practicing relaxation techniques such as **deep breathing** [\[R, R\]](#).

Relaxation techniques may help reduce stress and improve jaw pain and mouth opening [\[R, R\]](#).

16



Topical CBD

IMPACT1 / 5

EVIDENCE1 / 5

How to implement

Apply a CBD-infused cream or ointment to the affected area of the skin 2-3 times per day, gently massaging it into the skin until fully absorbed. Continue this regimen for at least 4 weeks to assess effectiveness.

Description

CBD, derived from the cannabis plant, is used topically in various skincare products for its potential anti-inflammatory and soothing effects on the skin. It is applied to address skin conditions like acne, eczema, and psoriasis.

[Cannabidiol \(CBD\)](#) is a compound found in cannabis. Unlike its cousin THC, **CBD is not psychoactive and can’t get you “high”** [\[R\]](#).

People use CBD to:

- Reduce anxiety [\[R, R\]](#)
- Relieve pain [\[R, R, R\]](#)
- Prevent seizures [\[R\]](#)
- Improve sleep [\[R\]](#)

Topical CBD products are also available. People use them for skincare, joint problems, and more [\[R, R\]](#).

How it helps

According to a single study, applying topical CBD (7%, 2x/day for 2 weeks) may relax the jaw muscles and reduce pain in people with TMJ disorders [\[R\]](#).

17



Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA)

IMPACT

1 / 5

EVIDENCE

1 / 5

How to implement

For managing pain and inflammation, take 300mg to 1,200mg of palmitoylethanolamide (PEA) in divided doses throughout the day, preferably with meals to enhance absorption. This regimen should be followed for at least 6 weeks to evaluate its effectiveness.

Description

Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA) is a naturally occurring fatty acid amide. It is a compound found in various tissues of animals, including humans. PEA has been a supplement for the past couple of decades, and is utilized for its potential anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving properties.

[Palmitoylethanolamide](#) (PEA) is a compound naturally made by the body to help combat inflammation [\[R\]](#).

It’s also made by plants and other animals. Good sources of PEA include [\[R\]](#):

- Soy lecithin
- Soybeans
- Egg yolk
- Peanuts

How it helps

In a non-placebo-controlled trial of 24 patients with TMJ osteoarthritis, supplementation with PEA (300 mg in the morning and 600 mg in the evening for 7 days and then 300 mg twice a day for 7 more days) improved pain better than ibuprofen [\[R\]](#).

PEA may help by targeting cells in the jaw that cause discomfort and regulating the immune system's response to inflammation.

18



PEMF

IMPACT

1 / 5

EVIDENCE

1 / 5

How to implement

Use a PEMF (Pulsed Electromagnetic Field) device for 30 minutes to 2 hours daily. Position the device as directed by the manufacturer, typically over the area of concern or discomfort. It can be part of your daily routine, such as during rest or activity, without a specific end date unless advised by a healthcare professional.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE
30 minutes

Description

PEMF, or Pulsed Electromagnetic Field therapy, involves the use of electromagnetic fields to stimulate cellular activity within the body. This therapy is believed to help improve circulation, reduce pain and inflammation, and enhance cellular function.

How it helps

PEMF (Pulsed Electromagnetic Field) therapy can help treat TMJ (Temporomandibular Joint) disorders by reducing inflammation and pain in the jaw joint and muscles. By delivering electromagnetic waves, it stimulates healing, reduces muscle tension, and increases blood flow, all of which can help improve jaw functioning and reduce symptoms of TMJ.

In a non-placebo-controlled trial of 45 patients with temporomandibular joint disorder, applying PEMF (50 HZ for 50 min) as an add-on to physiotherapy improved pain, ROM, and function better than physiotherapy alone [\[R\]](#).

19



Mindful Eating

IMPACT

0 / 5

EVIDENCE

0 / 5

How to implement

Allocate at least 20-30 minutes for each meal, taking small bites and chewing each bite around 20-30 times before swallowing. This practice should be maintained consistently at every meal to enhance digestion and control portion sizes.

Description

Chewing slowly and thoroughly can aid in digestion and promote a sense of fullness, potentially assisting with portion control and weight management. It can also enhance nutrient absorption by breaking down food more effectively in the mouth.

How it helps

Eating slowly and chewing thoroughly reduces the strain on the jaw muscles and temporomandibular joint by enabling smaller, more manageable bites and less strenuous chewing activity.

20



Mouthguards

IMPACT

0 / 5

EVIDENCE

0 / 5

How to implement

Wear a mouthguard during all activities where there is a risk of impact to the face, including sports like football, hockey, and martial arts. It should be worn for the entire duration of the activity each time you participate.

Description

Mouthguards are protective dental devices typically worn during sports or at night to prevent injury or teeth grinding (bruxism), ensuring dental health and reducing the risk of dental trauma.

Mouthguards or splints keep the teeth separated to reduce damage from teeth grinding. They are also known as night guards or dental guards [\[R\]](#).

Mouthguards are often custom-made by dentists for a perfect fit. However, stock guards or adjustable over-the-counter options are also available [\[R\]](#).

How it helps

Using a mouthguard can prevent teeth grinding during sleep and alleviate pressure on the jaw, thereby reducing symptoms associated with TMJ disorders.

21



Apply Heat

IMPACT

0 / 5

EVIDENCE

0 / 5

How to implement

Place a warm, not hot, heating pad or a warm wet towel on the affected area for 15-20 minutes at a time. Do this several times a day, ensuring there's at least a 1-hour interval between sessions to avoid skin damage.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

15 minutes

Description

Applying heat, such as through heating pads or warm baths, can help relieve muscle tension and soothe pain. It is a common method for managing muscle aches, menstrual cramps, and minor injuries.

People use hot applications to relieve pain, improve blood flow, and more [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Types of hot applications include [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Heating pads
- Hot baths
- Saunas
- Hot water bottles

How it helps

Applying heat can help relax the jaw muscles and increase blood circulation to the affected area, which can provide relief from pain and improve mobility in the temporomandibular joint.

22



Manual Therapy

IMPACT

0 / 5

EVIDENCE

0 / 5

How to implement

Schedule a session with a certified manual therapist, such as a physical therapist or chiropractor, once a week for at least 3 to 6 weeks. During these sessions, allow the therapist to apply hands-on techniques to manipulate muscles and joints aiming to improve mobility and reduce pain.

Description

Manual therapy encompasses various hands-on techniques used by healthcare professionals, including physical therapists and massage therapists, to alleviate pain, improve mobility, and promote overall musculoskeletal health. It can be effective for addressing a wide range of conditions, from muscle tension to joint disorders.

How it helps

Manual therapy for TMJ involves targeted movements and massages in the jaw region by a trained professional. It can reduce jaw pain, improve mobility and correct jaw misalignment, easing various symptoms associated with TMJ disorder.

23



Jaw Exercises

IMPACT

0 / 5

EVIDENCE

0 / 5

How to implement

Perform jaw exercises twice a day, each session lasting for 10 minutes. Focus on movements that open and stretch the jaw, such as slowly opening and closing your mouth as wide as comfortably possible, and moving the jaw gently from side to side. Consistent daily practice over several weeks is essential for noticeable improvement.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

10 minutes

Description

Jaw exercises can help alleviate symptoms of temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders and improve jaw mobility. They may provide relief from jaw pain and support better oral health.

How it helps

Jaw exercises can strengthen and stretch the jaw muscles, improve mobility, and promote proper alignment of the temporomandibular joint, which can reduce symptoms of TMJ disorders.

24



Exercise Therapy

IMPACT

0 / 5

EVIDENCE

0 / 5

How to implement

Begin by consulting with a physical therapist to assess your condition and create a personalized exercise plan. Follow the prescribed exercises consistently, focusing on areas needing improvement, such as strength, flexibility, or mobility. Start with gentle exercises, gradually increasing the intensity as you build strength. Ensure you perform the exercises correctly to avoid injury. Regularly check in with your therapist to adjust the plan based on your progress and feedback. Stay committed to the routine for the best results.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

1 hour

Description

Exercise therapy is a tailored approach to physical activity designed to improve mobility, strength, and overall health. It is often used to rehabilitate injuries, manage chronic conditions, and promote cardiovascular fitness.

How it helps

Exercise therapy for TMJ disorders can help reduce pain and improve jaw function. It does this by strengthening the jaw muscles, increasing flexibility, and promoting optimal alignment of the jaw joint.