

Prevent or Reduce Symptoms of TMJ Dysfunction

- ✓ Eat soft foods high in flavonoids, such as cooked fruits and vegetables. Flavonoids are plant-based antioxidants that may help decrease joint pain.
- ✓ Avoid saturated fats, fried foods, and caffeine. These foods may increase inflammation.
- ✓ DO NOT chew gum.



Supplements that may help:

The following nutritional tips may help prevent or reduce symptoms of TMJ dysfunction:

- ✓ **Glucosamine.** May reduce pain and help rebuild cartilage in the joint, which helps improve range of motion. Some studies show that glucosamine helps reduce pain in people with arthritis, which involves painful joints. One study found that glucosamine worked as well as ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) for relieving pain and other TMJ symptoms. Glucosamine is often combined with chondroitin sulfate. *Glucosamine may increase the risk of bleeding, especially if you also take blood thinners like warfarin (Coumadin), clopidogrel (Plavix), or aspirin. Some doctors think glucosamine might interfere with medications used to treat cancer. Ask your doctor before taking glucosamine and chondroitin.*
- ✓ **Vitamin C.** Is also used by the body to make cartilage. It may improve range of motion in your joints, including your jaw, although there are no scientific studies investigating vitamin C for TMJ problems. *Vitamin C supplements may interact with other medications, including chemotherapy drugs, estrogen, warfarin (Coumadin), and others.*
- ✓ **Calcium and Magnesium.** May help the jaw muscle relax, although there are no scientific studies using them for TMJ problems. *Magnesium and calcium interact with several medications, herbs, and supplements. They can also affect your heart and blood pressure, so be sure to tell your doctor before you take them.*



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Herbs

The use of herbs is a time-honored approach to strengthening the body and treating disease. Herbs, however, can trigger side effects, and can interact with other herbs, supplements, or medications. For these reasons, take herbs with care, under the supervision of a health care provider.

- ✓ **Cramp bark (*Viburnum opulus*) and lobelia (*Lobelia inflata*)** may help reduce muscle spasms, although there are no scientific studies to support using them for TMJ problems. *Use on the skin only and do not apply to broken skin. DO NOT take these herbs by mouth (orally).*



Homeopathy

Although few studies have examined the effectiveness of specific homeopathic therapies, professional homeopaths may consider the following remedies for the treatment of TMJ dysfunction based on their knowledge and experience. Before prescribing a remedy, homeopaths take into account a person's constitutional type, includes your physical, emotional, and psychological makeup. An experienced homeopath assesses all of these factors when determining the most appropriate treatment for each individual.

- ✓ **Causticum.** For burning pains.
- ✓ **Hypericum perforatum.** For sharp, shooting pains.
- ✓ **Ignatia.** For tension in the jaw.
- ✓ **Kalmia.** For face pain, especially with other joint pains or arthritis.
- ✓ **Magnesia phosphorica.** For muscle cramps.
- ✓ **Rhus toxicodendron.** For pains that feel better in the morning and in dry weather, and worse after movement or in wet weather.
- ✓ **Ruta graveolens.** For pains from overuse or injury.



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