

Jaw exercises

Keep help prevent your jaw from becoming stiff, exercise your jaw muscles as follows. Aim to do these exercises little and often. You will need to keep working at these exercises long term for maximum benefit.

Repeat the entire sequence 7 times a day.

1. Open your mouth as wide as possible. Hold at its maximum opening for 7 seconds, then release. Repeat 7 times.
2. Open your mouth wide, move your jaw to the left then release. Repeat 5 times.
3. Open your mouth wide, move your jaw to the right and then release. Repeat 5 times.

General advice

- If you find it hard to chew, try soft moist foods with plenty of sauces and gravy. Wash food down with drinks.
- If you need a fluid diet it is still important that you receive all the nourishment that your body needs. Follow your dietitian's advice and refer to our fluid diet sheet.
- A straw may be helpful for drinking.
- It is still important to keep your mouth clean. Use a small toothbrush if necessary. The Specialist Nurses can give you more advice about oral hygiene.
- A good way to check how wide you are able to open your mouth is by the 'Finger test'. Ask your Speech and Language Therapist to show you this. Aim to have a gap of at least two fingers width between your teeth – the exercises should help with this.

