FOREST ACRES DENTISTRY

Instructions for Patients with Temporomandibular Disorder (TMD)

Success in treating your temporomandibular joint disorder (TMJ) or associated muscular symptoms depends largely upon the way you treat the involved areas. Following the instructions below will help you to manage your symptoms and aid in the healing process.

Do's

Do breathe through your nose if able, not through your mouth.

Do rest your tongue against the roof of your mouth for greatest relaxation of your jaw muscles.

Do maintain good posture at all times (keep your head in the midline over your shoulders).

Do sleep on your back with a thin pillow under your head and a small towel roll under your neck.

Do try to limit opening your mouth to a thumb's thickness when yawning, laughing, coughing sneezing, or singing.

Do cut your food into small, bite-size pieces to prevent opening your mouth too wide.

If it is painful to open your mouth to brush your teeth, **do** try using a child's toothbrush.

When you are in stressful situations, **do** utilize stress management techniques to prevent unproductive tensing of your jaw, face and neck muscles.

Don'ts

Do not eat any foods that require prolonged chewing (hard crusts of bread, bagels, tough meats or popcorn).

Do not eat hard "crunchy" foods (peanuts, corn nuts and raw vegetables) or chew on ice cubes.

Do not chew gum, even occasionally!

Do not bite into any foods with your front teeth.

Do not move your jaw in such a way that it causes the joint to make a clicking, popping or grinding sound.

Do not bite your fingernails, chew on pencils or pens, bite your cheeks or lips, etc.

Do not protrude your lower jaw forward when applying lipstick, eating or talking.

Do not rest your jaw on your hand.

Do not clench or grind your teeth. Keep your lips together but your teeth apart!

If you wear a dental splint, **do not** play with it with your tongue.

Please feel free to call our office with any questions or problems anytime at 803-782-0965