



TMJ ARTHROSCOPY POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Following TMJ arthroscopy, you will be discharged from the ambulatory care or day surgery unit. At that time, you will have a dressing on your head that will be removed on the second day following surgery. At home, we recommend that for the next 24 to 48 hours you follow these instructions:

Remove the dressing (jaw bra) in 48 hours. There is a small piece of cotton in the ear canal. Please remove it carefully.

A full liquid or non-chew diet is recommended for the first 24 hours, then, advance to as normal a diet as possible over the next 72 hours.

Use Ice packs to the side of the face. 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off while awake.

Shower as needed taking care to keep the surgical site dry for the first four days.

Your occlusal appliance or splint (if you have one) should be worn full time unless otherwise instructed.

NOTE:

Although it is uncommon, you may experience some bleeding from the arthroscopy site. This would probably include a small amount of oozing and should be easily stopped with direct pressure over the area using a small gauze pad. If there is blood in your ear, Dr. Mueller can clear this out during your post-op visit. Sometimes there is swelling on the side of the face where the arthroscopy was performed due to water which has escaped from the joint space. This often disappears within 24-48 hours.

Medications

You should have the following medications either prior to the arthroscopy or upon being discharged from the ambulatory unit:

Antibiotics

A prescription for antibiotics should be give and you should take this medication for approximately one week.

Analgesics

A prescription for analgesics will be given either in the ambulatory care unit or prior to surgery. This is usually a narcotic analgesic (e.g. Vicodin or Tylenol with Codeine). A non-steroidal anti-inflammatory prescription (e.g. Naprosyn, Motrin, Clinoril, Toradol, or in most cases, a steroid pack.) may also be given in conjunction with the above narcotic medication. Please follow the prescription directions when taking these medications.



Appointments

You should expect to return to our office on the first, third and sixth weeks postoperatively. If there are any complications or problems that arise prior to the first visit, please call our office immediately.

Dental Appointments

You should make arrangements prior to arthroscopy to be seen by the dentist if any dental work is necessary.

Postoperative findings

Doctor Mueller will make every attempt to inform you of the postoperative findings immediately. He will often look for a member of your family or friend in the waiting room to discuss the findings. However, it has been our experience that you will best understand the postoperative findings at your first postoperative visit. At that time, we can further discuss what we have visualized.

A usual waiting period of five to six weeks after surgery is allowed for evaluation of the arthroscopic result. We anticipate that you will follow the above instruction and on the sixth week we can closely examine the benefits of the arthroscopy.

PLEASE READ THE ABOVE PRIOR TO ARTHROSCOPY AND IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DISCUSS THEM AT ANY TIME WITH OUR OFFICE STAFF OR THE DOCTOR.

POST-OP EXERCISES

PURPOSE

These jaw exercises are designed to increase the mobility of your jaw and restore normal functional ability.

PRECAUTIONS

The exercises should be done gently, never forcefully, and should not cause excessive pain. If any of the exercises cause undue pain, discontinue them for a short time, then, gradually start them again.

INSTRUCTIONS

Start with five repetitions and increase to ten to fifteen for each exercise. Do entire sequence of exercises four times daily.



EXERCISE ROUTINE:

1. Make a “clicking” sound with the tongue, opening mouth wide each time.
2. Keeping tongue on roof of mouth, open and close mouth in the pain and noise-free range.
3. Place your tongue on the upper back teeth on one side, open your mouth as wide as you can. Do this slowly and hold the wide open position for five seconds. Open your mouth as wide as you can and move your jaw slowly from side to side.
4. Attempt to jut jaw forward by opening mouth slightly and move the lower teeth in front of the upper jaw.
5. Stretch jaw by placing index finger on the very last lower tooth on each side. Gently stretch mouth open in this manner.
6. Attempt to put two knuckles on first two fingers between upper and lower teeth.