**What Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) Exercises Relieve Pain?**

TMJ disorders may cause mild to debilitating symptoms, such as:

* [pain while chewing](https://www.healthline.com/health/jaw-pain)
* pain in the ear, face, jaw, and neck
* clicking, grating, or [popping](https://www.healthline.com/health/jaw-popping) sounds in the jaw when you open or close your mouth
* locking of the jaw joint
* [headaches](https://www.healthline.com/health/headache)

## Exercises for TMJ pain relief

It’s unclear exactly how TMJ exercises may relieve pain. They’re thought to help:

* strengthen jaw muscles
* stretch the jaw
* relax the jaw
* increase jaw mobility
* reduce jaw clicking
* promote jaw healing
* Please refer to this website for information on the exercises to do <https://www.healthline.com/health/tmj-exercises>

**Other ways to manage your TMJ pain**

Over-the-counter pain relievers such as [ibuprofen](http://amzn.to/2tJlyce) and [acetaminophen](http://amzn.to/2FG50mY) may help relieve TMJ pain. Muscle relaxers may be prescribed for severe pain. Doctors may also recommend:

* [Night guards](http://amzn.to/2Hx7vJ9) to prevent [teeth grinding](https://www.healthline.com/symptom/teeth-grinding) and jaw clenching
* [mouth guards](http://amzn.to/2Hx7vJ9) to help realign your jaw if referred to a TMJ specialist
* warm towels
* [ice](https://www.healthline.com/health/make-cold-compress), no more than 15 minutes per hour and not directly on the skin
* stress-relief techniques to help prevent behaviors that cause jaw tension
* [acupuncture](https://www.healthline.com/health/dry-needling-vs-acupuncture) to relieve pressure in the affected area

TMJ pain may also be managed with simple lifestyle changes. You may wish to:

* eat a soft diet to allow the TMJ to relax
* avoid chewing gum
* avoid biting your nails
* avoid biting your lower lip
* practice good posture
* limit large jaw movements, such as yawning and singing

Severe pain caused by damaged joints may require more invasive treatments, such as corticosteroid injections into the TMJ. Surgery may be considered as a last resort. There isn’t any scientific evidence that surgical interventions for TMJ disorders are safe and effective.