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TMD SYMPTOMATIC CARE

SOFT DIET

- During the initial phase of treatment, particularly if symptoms are acute, stay on definitive soft diet(baby food, soup, milkshakes, eggs, hamburgers, etc.).
- When the symptoms start to improve, you may start to eat more substantial foods. However you should cut all food into small bite size pieces, but do not open your mouth any wider than the thickness of your thumb.
- Do not eat hard crusts of bread, tough meat, raw vegetables, chewing gum, or any other food that requires prolonged chewing.

NSAID OR NSAID SUBSTITUTES

- Since NSAID is the drug of choice for inflammation of any joint, you should take appropriate amounts of NSAID per your dentist's recommendation. As symptoms improve, you may decrease the amount of NSAID you take.

MOIST HEAT

- Moist heat applied to the area around a painful joint provides more relief from pain than dry heat
- Fill wash basin with water as hot as the skin can stand and soak two large Turkish towels in it. Take one out, wring it out, and apply it to the painful area. When the first towel cools, apply the second towel.
- This procedure should be carried out for 20 minutes three times a day allowing for at least a 20 minute interval between applications.

ICE

- Suitable for routine daily use as well as to relieve acute exacerbation of pain.
- Place a wooden ice cream stick in a small paper cup, fill the cup with water, and place it in the freezer. When the water is frozen, tear away the paper covering.
- Use the "popsicle" to massage the painful area in a circular motion. Keep the ice and don't exert pressure. The initial, uncomfortable cold feeling will be followed by a burning sensation, then a mild aching, then numbness.
- Stop when the numbness begins, or 5-7 minutes.

DISENGAGEMENT

One of the most important steps in breaking the habit of clenching and grinding your teeth is to learn to keep the lips together and the teeth apart. You must make a conscious effort to separate the teeth at the same time you keep your lips closed.

- Keep the upper and lower teeth apart by keeping the tongue positioned just behind the upper incisors. Post reminders at home, work, and in cars to correct jaw position if necessary.
- This simple step will relax the very muscles that become tense and taut besides permitting a more normal positioning of the jaw joints.
- Remember, the only time your teeth should touch is during swallowing and chewing.
- Rest is a basic principle of physical medicine. This implies some restriction of the function, avoiding rapid or extreme movements (such as wide yawning), and often the use of interocclusal appliance.

MASSAGE

- Massage the masseter and internal pterygoid muscles twice a day. (Cheek muscle.)
- Bend the head slightly and position the mandible so there is no occlusal contact.
- Use the balls of the thumbs to massage painful muscles with circular movements for 3 minutes.

RECIPROCAL MUSCLE INHIBITION EXERCISE

- Place a closed fist firmly against the lower jaw with the mouth closed and teeth touching lightly. Attempt for 10 seconds to open the lower jaw but prevent opening by pressing the fist against the jaw. Slowly allow the lower jaw to open halfway during the next 10 second period. Maintain enough resistance with your fist to require 10

seconds to reach the half opened position, prevent further opening for a third 10 second period while attempting to open. Relax.