

AFTER TMJ SURGERY

After TMJ surgery it is important that you avoid as many factors as possible that could contribute to a return of your TMJ disorder. Control of stress, avoidance of hard foods, protecting the jaw joints from injury, and adherence to the self-care regiment described earlier can help reduce the chances of a return of TMJ problems.

Your doctor will discuss ongoing treatment options such as occlusal splints, physical therapy, and other techniques applicable to your individual case.

Expect to experience swelling following the arthroscopy. This is normal and will generally persist for at least a few days.

Some discomfort will usually be experienced the evening of the surgery and sometimes the next day or so. Generally, this is mild and can be easily controlled with Aspirin or Tylenol. However, if these medications are not effective, you will be given a prescription for stronger medication to be used for the first day or two.

Jaw movement usually is limited for the first several days. Range of jaw motion and vertical opening should be restored after about 2 weeks depending upon the case and procedure performed.

Ice may also be applied to the face in 20-minute intervals for the first 72 hours.

You may apply a heating pad the fourth day after surgery or continue with the ice if heat is not tolerated.

The dressing can be removed the morning following the surgery and you can bathe or shower as desired. Do not be concerned about the small incisions. You may get them wet without worry.

If you had a rib graft, dressings will be applied and should not be removed for 2 to 4 days following the surgery. Baths and showers may be taken after dressings are removed.

Diet should consist of liquids and soft food for 2 to 6 weeks. Consistency of your diet will depend upon the procedure performed.

Depending upon your case, you will be instructed in how soon after surgery you should see your doctor or your physical therapist (if applicable).