

# Jaw Exercises

The treatment you have undergone is likely to cause stiffening and tightening of your jaw muscles, which can reduce how wide you can open your mouth. This is called trismus and it can develop a few weeks or even months / years after treatment.

## Why should I do jaw exercises?

The ability to open your jaw wide is important for allowing good oral hygiene, medical and dental examinations and treatment, as well as eating and drinking. These exercises will help to improve and / or maintain the range and strength of movements of your jaw. The earlier you start these exercises the more successful they are.

## Instructions

1. Open your mouth wide. Use your thumb and forefinger to support your lower jaw and pull it down. Hold for five seconds initially and gradually build up to 30 seconds.

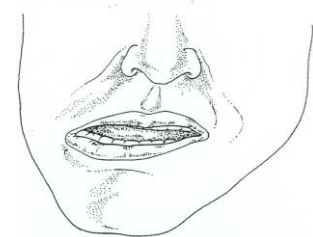
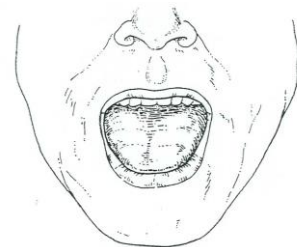
**Relax and repeat five times**

2. Move your jaw to the left and hold for five seconds. Relax, then do the same to the right.

**Repeat five times**

3. Move your jaw in a circular motion, as though chewing.

**Repeat 5-10 times**



## Recommendations

- Repeat each of the exercises 5-10 times.
- Complete this full set of exercises five times per day.
- If you have an ache, a tight or pulling feeling or discomfort in your jaw, take your pain relief at least half an hour before practice.
- Before you start the exercises each time, you may find it helpful to hold a warm compress around your jaw on both sides and to massage your jaw gently but firmly.

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns including new pain when doing these exercises or deterioration in your jaw opening, please contact your speech and language therapist on 020 8725 1163 (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm). Out of hours, please leave a message. **Email:** [headandneckslt@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:headandneckslt@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm

Friday between 10am and 2pm.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing.

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111

### AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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