

Alamance Family
DENTISTRY
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Oral Appliance Therapy Information

Common Side Effects

Common side effects you may experience when starting appliance therapy are tooth soreness, jaw discomfort, tooth movement, bite changes and increased saliva flow. Soreness in the teeth and jaws could last 1-2 hours post removal of the appliances in the morning. If the soreness prevents you from doing any normal daily activities such as eating or talking, please contact the office about your concerns immediately as an adjustment to the appliance may be needed.

If soreness to the teeth is even across all teeth and subsides within a short time post removal, this is considered normal. If there is a specific tooth or an area of teeth that are bothering you, contact our office as an adjustment may be needed to resolve the issue.

Soreness in the jaw should feel like a sore, overworked muscle. If the soreness lasts 1-2 hours post removal of the appliance, this is considered within normal limits. If the soreness is lasting into the afternoon or preventing you from eating, talking or any other normal, daily activity, you can massage the jaw joints, follow the pain protocol listed below and discontinue use of the appliance until evaluation by our office can be completed.

Pain protocol: 400mg Ibuprofen + 500mg Tylenol (acetaminophen) every 6 hours. Remember to take the Ibuprofen and Tylenol at the same time, do not alternate them.

For dull pain in the jaw joint(s): apply heat lying down as holding your arm up to apply heat can put additional tension on neck and jaw musculature. Wrap a moist heat source using an ACE type bandage around the jaw joint(s) to secure without having to hold up your arm to keep in place.

Two methods for making a homemade heat pad are listed below.

Method 1: Towel Compress

1. Wet TWO hand towels with water. Squeeze out the excess water until they are just damp.
2. Put one towel in a ziplock bag, being sure to leave the bag open. Place the bag in the microwave and heat on high for 2 minutes.
3. Remove the bag from the microwave. Be careful – it will be hot! Seal the ziplock bag, and wrap the other wet towel around the bag.
4. Apply your homemade heating pad to the sore area. The heat should last about 20 minutes.

Method 2: Sock compress

1. Fill a tube type sock with rice. Leave enough room at the top so you can close the opening by either sewing it shut or tying it with a rubber band or string.
2. Microwave on high for no more than 3 minutes.

3. Remove from the microwave (again, be careful, it will be hot!). Apply to the sore jaw joint(s). If you need more time once the heat has dissipated, microwave again for 1 minute and reapply.

Cleaning

In the mornings, remove the oral appliances and clean with a soft brush (like a denture brush) using **HAND** soap. Rinse thoroughly and *let air dry*.

Morning Re-programming

In the morning, when you take your appliance out, you are going to feel like you are chewing on your front teeth. This is due to muscle memory. Wait 15-20 minutes before placing your morning occlusal guard or attempting morning stretches. Wear the morning occlusal guard for 5-10 minutes while you complete the range of motion exercises in this video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBoe7rcQRLA

Please note, a link to this video is provided on the patient portal portion of our sleep medicine website: www.sleepmedicineofnc.com