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TMJ SELF-SOOTHING GUIDE

A gentle, nervous-system-led approach to easing jaw tension

What This Helps With

TMJ tension can show up as jaw pain, clenching, headaches, ear pressure, or facial tightness. These simple techniques help soften the jaw, calm the nervous system, and reduce strain patterns.

1. Settle Your Nervous System

A relaxed jaw starts with a relaxed body.

- **Soft belly breathing** — inhale 4, exhale 6

How to do it:

- Place one hand on your belly.
- Inhale slowly through your nose.
- Feel your belly rise.
- Exhale gently
- Repeat for 5-10 breaths.

This helps shift your nervous system out of activation.

- **Tongue drop** — rest tongue on the floor of the mouth

Steps:

-

Let your tongue fall away from the roof of your mouth.

- Keep your teeth slightly apart.
- Relax your lips
- This is one of the fastest ways to reduce jaw tension.

- **Shoulder melt** — let shoulders fall away from ears

Steps:

- Lift your shoulders slightly.
- Exhale and let them drop.
- Repeat 3-5 times

This reduces strain on the jaw and neck.



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Spend 1-2 minutes here before moving on.

2. Gentle Jaw Release

Use slow, light pressure. Never force.

- **Masseter softening** — tiny circles on the side of the jaw

Technique

- Place your fingertips on the sides of your jaw.
- Make tiny circular movements.
- Move slowly and gently.

This helps release stored tension.

- **Cheek sweep** — glide fingertips from nose outward

Steps:

- Place your fingertips at your nose.
- Sweep gently toward your ears.
- Repeat 5-10 times.

- **Ear-to-jaw decompression** — draw skin downward as you exhale

Steps:

- Settle your shoulders
- Place your fingers gently around the ear
- Soften the tissue around the ear
- Guide toward the Jaw
- Add a gentle downward Glide
- Repeat on other side

- **Temporalis sweep** - glide fingertips towards ears.

Steps:

- Place your fingertips at your temples.
- Sweep gently toward your ears.
- Repeat 5-10 times.



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3. Break the Clenching Pattern

Small habits make the biggest difference.

- Lips together, teeth apart
- Jaw awareness check-ins
- Tongue posture reset

4. Evening Soothing Ritual

Perfect if you clench at night.

- Warm compress for 5-10 minutes
- Avoid gum and hard foods
- Neck lengthening
- Diaphragmatic breathing

When to Seek Support

Reach out if you experience:

- Persistent or worsening pain
- Painful clicking
- Locking or limited opening
- Headaches linked to jaw tension
- Stress-related clenching that feels hard to manage

You're Not Alone

Gentle bodywork, craniosacral therapy, and stress-regulation techniques can support long-term relief.

Karuna Wellbeing Ltd • Liverpool L18 2DA

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