

## **Sleep Medicine Network Patient Information Document**

### **Suggested Exercise Protocols for the Mitigation of the Risk of Permanent Occlusal Change from Long-Term Use of Mandibular Advancement Appliances.**

Virtually all patients who use mandibular advancement appliances for the management of sleep disordered breathing will experience a transient and highly noticeable change in their bite in the morning following a night of appliance use. This does not typically indicate a change in tooth position, rather an incomplete return of the jaw to its normal position. Typically the front teeth will hit prematurely, preventing the back teeth from coming together. This “posterior open bite” should be restored to normal as soon each day as possible to help prevent any permanent changes.

Patients may use any combination of, or all the following techniques. Each patient should determine the most effective procedures and should be compliant with their use each day on rising.

1. The gentlest approach is to set the alarm for about 30 minutes prior to the need to get out of bed. The appliance is removed and the patient lies supine with a relaxed jaw for the thirty minutes while listening to news, music or simply planning the day. Much of the repositioning can be accomplished in this manner.
2. Many patients prefer to lay prone with their lower jaw resting on the back of their clasped hands. The weight of the head on the relaxed jaw is a little more aggressive and may help restore the bite a little faster.
3. Some patients tip their head down at the breakfast table, assuming “The Thinker’s” pose to again use the head’s weight to stretch the jaw the opposite direction it has been pulled all night.
4. Some prefer the use of gum chewing for a short time, but that technique is a little more aggressive.
5. The use of the bite tab exerciser, dispensed with each TAP Appliance is an effective tool that can be used easily throughout the day if necessary in the beginning of this therapy. Please refer to the instructions given in the TAP Patient Instruction Booklet that accompanies every appliance.

It should be the patient’s goal to normalize the bite within 30 minutes following the removal of the device. If the patient is unsuccessful, the patient should notify their Sleep Medicine Network affiliate dentist.