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TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT

The temporomandibular joint and the muscles that move the jaw can be frequently inflamed. When inflamed, a variety of symptoms can occur including earache, headache (most often on the sides of the head and in the front of the head), as well as dizziness and ringing in the ears. The simplest things to do when this diagnosis is made are the following:

1. Soft and liquid diet for two weeks. (You want to avoid chewing, no bagels, apples, raw carrots or any other foods that require you to open and close your mouth widely and to chew tightly on back teeth).
2. Warm to hot moist soaks on the sides of your head and in front of your ears as often as possible during the day. (This will allow the muscles that move the joint to relieve their spasm). If pain is acute, use ice for 5-10 minutes at a time. Massage for 20 minutes three time/day.
3. Advil, 600 milligrams three to four times a day around-the-clock or, some other antiinflammatory medication prescribed by the doctor. (This will help to reduce the inflammation of the joint and relieve pain).
4. If you have not recently seen your dentist, it is a good idea to contact your dentist for an oral evaluation and the possibility of having a splint made if this becomes a recurrent problem.
5. Avoid chewing gum at all costs.

