



Pain Management:

The numbness will start to wear off after about an hour and most people will experience moderate to severe discomfort. This may be managed with NSAIDs like ibuprofen.

- ☐ Adults: 600-800 mg every 6-8 hours as needed.
- ☐ Children: See bottle for instructions
- ☐ Toddlers: See bottle for instructions

*Toddlers are at high risk for accidentally biting their tongues after the procedure. Please make sure they avoid eating anything hard or crunchy until an hour after the procedure.



What you may notice during the first week of healing

It is normal to experience the following:

- ☐ Moderate discomfort at rest or while eating
- ☐ Tenderness in the lower jaw and neck area
- ☐ Difficulty talking and swallowing
- ☐ Pain with moving tongue or lip



Diet

Certain types of foods and drinks may be uncomfortable to eat. These may include:

- ☐ Hard, crunchy, and spicy foods
- ☐ Hot or acidic drinks

It may be best to eat softer foods after the procedure. Cold foods such as popsicles, ice cream and ice water may have a soothing effect. You are allowed to drink out of a straw so smoothies, and milkshakes are great afterwards. As the area continues to heal feel free to eat and drink whatever is tolerable

Stretching Exercises:



The lip stretch is necessary for every age group. The tongue stretch will always be necessary for children under the age of 6. Most older kids and adults will have sutures placed in which no stretches are necessary. If sutures were placed, it is normal for them to loosen up and have a few fall out after a couple of days. The sutured area may be whitish gray after a few days. **The stretches need to be done every 4 hours for 2 weeks. You may start 12 hours after the procedure.**



Lip Stretch

1. Lift the lip all the way up to the nostrils for about one second.
2. Use the soft pad of your index finger to slide over the diamond from left to right about 2-3 times. Make sure you only use light pressure.



Tongue Stretch

1. Make sure you are able to open as wide as possible.
2. You may need to use a mouth prop to assist you.
3. Pull the tongue as far back as you can at the top of the diamond to see the tongue unfold and elongate
4. Repeat this motion 3 times.

Tips for Toddlers and

Children:

Children from ages 1-3 can be extremely difficult to perform the post op stretches. Positive reinforcement is important. You may use popsicles, suckers, or any favorite food item to help gain access to the under surface of the tongue. However, sometimes kids can overcome these tricks and it will require a mouth prop and more force to keep your child's mouth open and still.





Tongue Muscle Strengthening and Range of Motion Exercises

The exercises below are geared towards ages 4 and above to help improve range of motion and coordination.

If you are already working with a myofunctional therapist or speech therapist, they may have a more detailed list of exercises to perform.

For most patients, improvements with tongue movements and symptoms are not typically apparent until 1-3 months post-operatively. The muscles take time to increase in strength and re-learn to function properly.

Optimal results are typically achieved when surgery is paired with a therapy program. These exercises will help promote optimal wound healing and strengthen the tongue muscles.

Perform each set of exercises at least 4 times a day for 4-6 weeks.

Extend

Push the tongue in and out of the mouth. Try to point the tongue as far forward as possible. Perform 5 repetitions.

Elevate

While opening your mouth as wide as you can try to touch the tongue to the back of your upper teeth. If you still cannot touch the teeth that is OK. It will take time and practice. The key is to NOT close your jaw in order to get the tongue to touch the teeth as if bending knees in order to touch toes. Perform 5 repetitions.

Lateralize

With your tongue in your mouth, move tongue side to side (left molars to right molars) 5 times. Try doing this while keeping your jaw still. Perform 5 repetitions.

Food Fun

Place a food of your choice in your mouth between your back teeth and cheek. Move food to other side of mouth and then move it back to the other side. Perform 5 repetitions.

For Kids

It may be more fun to make a game and place something tasty like chocolate syrup or peanut butter above the lips (just barely out of reach) and instruct your child to try and lick the food away.