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## How to Use Shiatsu for TMJ

Temporo-Mandibular Joint Syndrome (TMJ) is a collection of symptoms that includes a clicking or grinding sound when you open and close your jaw and is caused by a malfunction of the joint where the mandible (lower jaw) meets the skull. Shiatsu assists and promotes the healing process by releasing tension and muscle spasms in the jaw and provides an overall stress release as it calms the nervous system.

### ● Steps:

1. Feel the tension begin to release as you move your jaw from side to side, clench your teeth and open wide to loosen the muscle. Begin by pressing both sides of your jaw with the heels of your hands.
2. Press the same point again and begin with your mouth open so as to position the pad of your index finger in the middle of the muscle. Close your mouth and press firmly until you feel a tolerable pain and breathe deeply to promote relaxation.
3. Relieve facial spasm and jaw pain with the pressure point found in a hollow just below the earlobe. Use your middle finger and press toward your jaw.
4. Relieve jaw pain, earache and headache by using your middle finger to press the point found just in front of the ear in a hollow formed when the jaw is open.
5. Place your ring finger on the point one-half inch above the point in step 4 and

your index finger on the point one-half inch below the point in step 4.

6. Apply firm pressure to all three points for approximately one minute to promote relief from TMJ.
7. Repeat step 2.
8. Find the pressure point located in the hollow area just below the cheekbone and in front of the lower jaw bone. Apply pressure with your middle finger to promote release of tension in the jaw.
9. Release jaw and shoulder tension with the point located at the web between your thumb and index finger. Press toward your index finger with the pad of the opposite thumb to stimulate this point. Use firm pressure to stimulate this point and hold the point for at least 2 minutes to assure an effective release.

**\* Tips:**

- Apply heat directly to the jaw and neck to help release muscle tension and promote circulation in the joint.
- Use a warming salve on your neck and shoulders and jaw muscles to release tension and prevent spasm in the muscles.
- Treatment includes the use of a bite plate to prevent grinding, as well as stress-reducing techniques that include meditation and bodywork.

**⚠ Warnings:**

- Avoid step #8 in pregnant women as it can cause premature uterine contractions when stimulated!
- Symptoms of TMJ include ear pain, tiredness, soreness, headache and stiffness of the jaw upon waking. Consult a physician if you have any of these symptoms or if the pain lasts for more than 72 hours.
- If you have any questions or concerns, contact a physician or other health care professional before engaging in any activity related to health and diet. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment