

Your jaws were wired together as the result of an accident or surgery. This is known as intermaxillary fixation (IMF). The devices placed within your jaw act to stabilize the bones to allow healing – similar to casting a broken limb. Your jaws will be wired together for 4-6 weeks. The wires may be changed to elastics during the treatment, prior to removal of the fixation devices. During this time, you may find eating, speaking, and hygiene difficult. The instructions below aim to provide some solutions to some difficulties you may encounter.

1. Diet:

- Initially, consume only liquids or very soft foods such as broths, soups, pureed vegetables, yogurt, and smoothies.
- Avoid hard, crunchy, sticky, or chewy foods as they may dislodge or damage the wiring.
- Protein shakes or meal replacements, such as Ensure or Boost, may be helpful.
- Other foods, such as cooked meats, eggs, cereals, fruits, and/or vegetables should be blenderized to a fine consistency to allow administration. Straining the mixture prior to eating will help avoid food particles from becoming trapped between your teeth and devices.
- Avoid foods with seeds, such as berries.
- A Toomey syringe, provided after your procedure, may help in administering food to the posterior areas of your mouth where liquids may be directed behind your last molar teeth to swallow.
- Follow the diet prescribed to you by your surgeon during your assessment and follow-ups.

2. Oral Hygiene:

- Maintain excellent oral hygiene to prevent complications such as infection and plaque buildup:
 - Continue brushing your teeth gently using a soft-bristled toothbrush at least twice daily.
 - Rinse your mouth with the prescribed Chlorhexidine mouthwash after meals to help keep the mouth clean. Please note Chlorhexidine may cause staining of your teeth or darkening of your tongue. The stains can be removed with a dental cleaning, while the darkening of the tongue will resolve after cessation of the mouthwash once the fixation devices are removed.
 - Use a water flosser or syringe to irrigate between teeth and around wires. Water flossers may be purchased from most drug stores.

3. Pain Management:

- Take prescribed pain medications as directed by your healthcare provider to manage discomfort.
- Apply ice packs to the outside of the jaw intermittently (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off) to reduce swelling and alleviate pain.

4. Activity and Rest:

- Avoid strenuous physical activities and heavy lifting.
- Rest with your head elevated to minimize swelling and promote comfort.

5. Care for Wiring:

- Wires may require adjustments by your surgeon during your treatment.
- Avoid manipulating the wires or attempting to adjust them yourself.
- Report any loosening or breakage of wires to your healthcare provider immediately.
- Wire cutters were provided in the event you must vomit.
- Should you need to vomit, bend your head forward and allow the vomitus to flow out the mouth and nose.
- Should you have issues with breathing, please cut the wires as instructed and call your surgeon.