

CLENCHING AND GRINDING TEETH

Lips Together and Teeth Apart

- One of the most important steps in breaking the habit of clenching or grinding the teeth is to become self-conscious when it occurs and, of course, to stop the habit. One excellent way to avoid clenching is to learn to keep the lips together and the teeth apart. This simple step will not only make it impossible to clench the teeth, but, even more important, it will relax the very muscles that become tense and taut. Keeping the lips together and the teeth apart also permits normal positioning of the various components of the temporomandibular joints.
- The more self-conscious you are about this very basic procedure of relaxing the jaw muscles, the faster you will master a new and beneficial way of overcoming a harmful habit. Gradually, you will find yourself waking up in the morning without your teeth clenched. But you must persevere. Remember that you have had the bad habit for a long time, and it won't vanish overnight. You must make a conscious effort to separate your teeth, while at the same time keeping your lips closed. Repeat to yourself several times a day: "lips together and teeth apart". An extra dividend: You'll find this facial posture will improve your expression and appearance!

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