Using your TheraBite®

This information sheet is for adults with trismus who have been recommended by their speech and language therapist to use a TheraBite device.

What is a TheraBite?

A TheraBite is a hand-held device, specifically designed to help open and stretch your jaw, without putting strain upon the surrounding jaw muscles.

Why have I been given a TheraBite?

A TheraBite helps in the treatment and rehabilitation of trismus. Trismus is a term used to describe painful and/or limited jaw movement. Trismus can occur for a variety of reasons including radiotherapy and/or surgery to the head and neck area.

You may be given a TheraBite by your speech and language therapist because trismus is affecting your ability to open your mouth effectively. You may have previously been given jaw exercises to complete. The TheraBite is a way of maintaining your jaw opening without the strain and muscular pain that you may have experienced when trying to exercise your jaw independently.

How do I use my TheraBite?

When you are first given your TheraBite, your speech and language therapist will adjust it to the appropriate setting for you in order to give you the maximum stretch possible, but in a comfortable way.

The TheraBite can be adjusted either by turning the white adjustment knob at the end of the device when the setting becomes too easy for you. Otherwise your speech and language therapist will change the settings for you in your next speech and language therapy appointment.

- Place the mouthpiece between your teeth. Ensure that your teeth are comfortably positioned on the bite pads.
- Do not bite down on the pads, rest your teeth on them gently.
Gently squeeze the lever on the top of the device - this will open your jaw. Squeeze the lever down as far as you can.

You should feel a stretch and resistance from your jaw. Hold for seven seconds.

Release the lever on top to slowly close your mouth and then pause before the next stretch.

If you find that turning the white knob no longer gives you a big enough stretch, you can adjust the lever handle to increase the range of motion.

On the lever there are five holes, 5 being the smallest opening (25mm), through to 1 (45mm) which has the largest range of movement.

By pushing the peg out with a pen or small screwdriver and moving it up to the next hole, you can change the lever setting.

Moving the peg up through the numbers (5-1) will allow you to increase the range of motion of the TheraBite and therefore increase the stretch you can achieve.

When should I use my TheraBite?
The TheraBite should be used:

- seven stretches
- seven times per day
- seven seconds per stretch

This is called a seven-seven-seven protocol.

Make sure you pause between each stretch so that your jaw does not become overly strained.

If you have any problems keeping to this routine, then please talk to your speech and language therapist and they will advise you on what to do.
How do I look after my TheraBite?

The device is easy to look after. Use soap and water to clean the device and if the bite pads become unstuck or dirty, replace them with the spares provided. If you run out of the pads, please contact your speech and language therapist who will provide you with more.

New bite pads can be attached by peeling off the protective tape and then firmly pressing the pad onto the mouthpiece. The longer the pad sits on the mouthpiece before use, the better they adhere to the device.

What should I do if I encounter problems with my TheraBite?

If you are having any problems with the TheraBite device, do not hesitate to contact your speech and language therapist directly or the speech and language therapy department on 01223 216200.