Oral-Motor Workouts for Home

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The term *oral-motor* refers to the use and function of the muscles of the face (lips, tongue, and jaw). For chewing and swallowing, children need to have the right amount of strength, range of motion, and coordination. When a child has limited movement, coordination, and/or strength of the lips, tongue and/or jaw, eating is difficult. Contact your child’s doctor if these issues are noticeable. The doctor may refer you to a *speech-language pathologist* or *occupational therapist*—licensed professionals that assess and treat oral-motor deficits.

**Types of Oral-Motor Exercises**

Your child can do the following oral-motor exercises to improve strength, range of motion, and coordination of the lips, tongue, and jaw. Use the blank lines below to create your own oral-motor exercise routine.

- Open and close your mouth ________ times.
- Pucker your lips as if you were going to give someone a kiss ________ times.
- Smile, then relax your lips and cheeks ________ times.
- Press your lips tightly together, then open them with a smack ________ times.
- Puff your cheeks with air while keeping your lips closed tightly ________ times.

**LIPS**

- Stick your tongue out as far as you can ________ times.
- Move your tongue to the left side of your mouth then to the right side of your mouth ________ times.
- Try to touch your chin with your tongue without moving your head ________ times.

**TONGUE**
Try to touch your nose with your tongue without moving your head _______ times.

Push the inside of your cheek with your tongue on the right side and then on the left side _______ times.

Place your tongue behind your front teeth and say “la” _______ times.

Lick your lips _______ times.

Open your jaw as wide as you can _______ times.

Move your jaw from side-to-side slowly _______ times, then quickly _______ times.

Move your jaw up and down slowly _______ times, then quickly _______ times.

Blowing Bubbles strengthens muscles of the lips and improves breath control.

Licking peanut butter or marshmallow crème from the roof of the mouth or behind the top front teeth improves tongue elevation/lifting.

Chewing gum improves jaw strength.

Making silly faces improves strength, coordination and range of motion of the lips, jaw, and tongue.

Resources


The list of Super Duper® products below may be helpful when doing oral-motor activities. Visit www.superduperinc.com or call 1-800-277-8737. Click the links below to see the product description.

“Can Do”™ Oral Motor Fun Deck®

”Can Do”® Oral-Motor Fun and Games- Fun Sheets and Cards Book and CD-ROM

”Can Do™” Oral-Motor Game Boards

Jumbo Mighty Mouth® Hand Puppet