

# Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

## Oral-Motor Workouts for Home

by Thaashida L. Hutton, M.S., CCC-SLP

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.

#### LIPS



- 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.

#### TONGUE



- 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.



- 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.



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(cont.)

## JAW



- 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.



## Oral-Motor Fun at Home

- **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:

Oral motor exercises/oral exercises-wide smiles. (1996). Retrieved October 3, 2008, from <http://www.widesmiles.org/cleftlinks/WS-563.html>

Oral motor exercise. (1998). Retrieved October 3, 2008, from [http://www.clarian.org/pdf/neuro\\_oral\\_motor\\_exercises.pdf](http://www.clarian.org/pdf/neuro_oral_motor_exercises.pdf)

Till, J.A., Yorkston, K.M., & Beukelman, D.R. (1994). Motor Speech Disorders-Advances in Assessment and Treatment. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

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