A SIMPLIFIED JAW DILATING DEVICE TO MANAGE TRISMUS

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ABSTRACT:

Introduction: Trismus is a common postoperative sequela following any minor or major oral and maxillofacial surgery. The condition is often difficult to manage effectively as the treatment needs a proper patient’s compliance.

Methods & Materials: This technical note demonstrates the construction of a simple yet effective jaw dilating device to manage trismus. The construction of this device requires few stainless steel table spoons, a wooden roll and elastic bands.

Conclusion: This is a simple and cost-effective device that can be easily constructed and used by patients to assist mouth opening.

Keywords: Trismus; mouth opening; mouth gag; cost-effective

I. INTRODUCTION:

Trismus (limited mouth opening) is a common clinical finding with a variety of causes, which may interfere with mastication, speech, oral hygiene and also lessens the quality of life. Furthermore, trismus is one among the various postoperative sequela following any oral and maxillofacial surgery including trauma, temporomandibular joint, cancer and reconstructive surgery. The condition is often difficult to manage effectively as the treatment needs a proper patient’s compliance.

Various commercially available mechanical aids exist which increases the mouth opening; however, they are often too expensive for routine use. Hence, this technical note describes the construction of a simple, inexpensive, yet effective home-made device that can be easily constructed and used by patients to assist mouth opening.

II. TECHNIQUE:

The device consists of 2-4 heavy stainless steel table spoons fastened at right angles above and below a wooden roll with the back of the bowl part of the spoon facing each other as shown in Figure 1. The spoons and the wooden roll are held in place by elastic bands in a criss-cross arrangement near the neck of the spoon. (Figure 1) The patient places the handle end of the spoon in the mouth and then presses the bowl end, which acts as a lever and aids in opening the mouth. (Figure 2) The handle of the spoons can be covered with elastic bands in order to prevent trauma to the teeth. We have tried the device in five patients with trismus following removal of impacted third molars and found it very effective in improving their mouth opening.
Figure 1: Simplified jaw dilating device.

Figure 2: Device in use.

REFERENCES: