



MYOFUNCTIONAL EXERCISES

The tongue is a voluntary muscle and therefore can be trained like other muscles of the body. The following three exercises will help you learn to swallow properly and help eliminate your tongue thrusting habit.

- **CLICK** – Place the tip of your tongue high on your palate. Press your tongue firmly upward and then bring it down forcefully to make a clicking or popping sound. Repeat this exercise as often as possible throughout the day. Your tongue should begin to feel more comfortable resting in the palate, rather than around the lower teeth
- **SLURP**—After practicing the first exercise, place your tongue as if to click, but instead suck air back into the back of your throat. This pulls the tongue backwards. Now swallow while pressing your tongue against the palate without allowing the tongue to thrust forward.
- **SQUEEZE**—While swallowing, tighten the muscles of your face and force the teeth together as strongly as possible. Hold this position for 15 seconds, then relax and repeat three times for a total of one minute. Do this exercise five times a day.

Exercise in front of a mirror, hold the lip down so that your teeth and tongue are visible. It takes practice and determination to stop thrusting your tongue. **PRACTICE PRACTICE PRACTICE THESE EXERCISES!**

In addition to these exercises try not to drink any liquids while eating solid food. In the swallowing pattern of a true tongue thruster, the tongue does not push the food down the throat; it thrusts forward, leaving the food at the base of the tongue. The liquid then washes the food down, as in taking a pill. If you do not drink while eating solid food your tongue must work a little harder for you to swallow.

For some more exercises and demonstrations:

<http://dentistry.helium.com/how-to/10126-how-to-fix-a-tongue-thrust#>