Dislocated Mandible

You have had a dislocated mandible or jaw. This means that the joint connecting the jaw to the skull in front of the ears is out of place. **It most often occurs when you open your mouth too wide while yelling, yawning or eating.** A dislocated jaw may also be caused by a direct blow to the chin as in accidents or fights. If the jaw is pushed or slips out of place, the mouth will be stuck open and there will be pain and muscle spasms around the sides of the face.

Treatment requires the jaw to be placed back into its normal position as soon as possible. This often requires giving IV (intravenous) medicines to sedate you and relax the muscles that control the jaw. For the next 2-3 days, apply ice packs around the jaw frequently to reduce the swelling and pain. Eat a soft diet for about a week. This includes soups, cooked cereal, applesauce, bananas, eggs, dairy products, and gelatin.

For the next month, do not open your mouth widely to eat, yell, or yawn. Keep your chin from moving with the back of your hand if you yawn. If you have repeated dislocations, you may need to wear a bandage to restrict the jaw. Sometimes surgery is needed if the jaw dislocates often. Call your caregivers for follow up as recommended.

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