



## TalkTools® Jaw Bite Tube Instructions

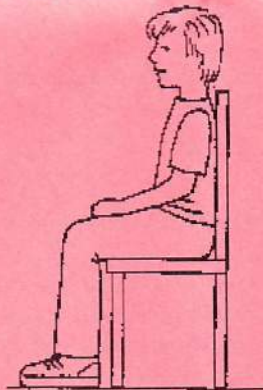
*Disinfection Instructions: Most TalkTools® products are reusable and should be thoroughly cleaned or sterilized between uses. If this is a concern, please contact your local Center for Disease Control for further guidance.*



**Jaw Bite Tube Hierarchy:** The four Bite Tubes (one red and one yellow Chewy Tube®, one purple and one green ARK's Grabber) are used in these activities to assess jaw skill levels and work toward improving jaw stability, symmetry and grading. The skills acquired in these activities can then be transitioned into improved feeding safety and the graded movements necessary for standard speech sound production on the single-sound and conversational levels. The Bite Tubes can also be used to satisfy a client's need for temporomandibular joint stimulation and as an alternative to teeth grinding, thumb sucking, pacifier usage; etc.

### Suggestions for Jaw Bite Tube Therapy

1. As in all muscle-based activity work, the client must be placed in a stable seating posture. Establish this posture by choosing a chair which will encourage a 90-degree angle in the client's pelvis, knees, ankles and chin (as pictured below). Monitor to ensure that he/she maintains this posture during all muscle-based practice sessions. Work face-to-face with the client's hands down or at midline. A piece of Dycem® placed on the surface of the seat may assist in establishing and maintaining stability. The client's head must be maintained at midline (not off to one side or the other) while performing these activities.



2. Do not let the client hold any of the Bite Tubes until the criteria for success has been mastered for each. Once your client has mastered 10 up-and-down chews on any or all of the tools used in these activities, he or she can be taught to hold the tube, position it on the back molars, and use it as an alternative to thumbsucking, nail biting, teeth grinding, etc. These tools can also be used to satisfy the need for temporomandibular joint stimulation in clients who are using undesirable oral habits such as teeth grinding, thumb or finger suckling, prolonged dependence on bottle-feeding, excessive biting on non-food items, nail biting, etc. A complete description of techniques to address these habits can be found in *Assessment and Treatment of the Jaw: Putting It All Together – Sensory, Feeding and Speech*, by Sara Rosenfeld-Johnson, M.S., CCC-SLP. Once the client has mastered the 10 up-and-down chews on any or all of the four tubes used in this activity, he or she can be taught to hold the tube.
3. Establish that the Bite Tubes are therapy tools and should not be used as toys by younger clients or their siblings. When not used for practice, these tools should be kept out of reach.
4. Implement the hierarchy in the following sequence: red Chewy Tube®, yellow Chewy Tube®, purple Grabber, and green Grabber.
5. The red Chewy Tube® is larger in diameter and easier to compress. It is used to assess a wider jaw grade or excursion. The yellow Chewy Tube® is smaller in diameter and requires a more refined and narrow graded movement. Neither tool requires more strength in the jaw than is necessary for safe feeding or speech sound production.

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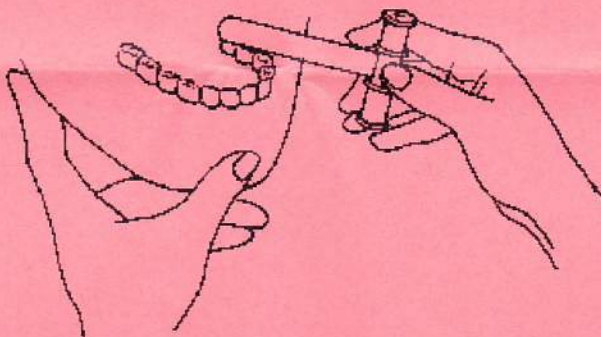
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6. The Grabbers are more difficult to chew than the Chewy Tubes®. The purple Grabber is easier to compress than the green. Neither tool requires more strength in the jaw than is necessary for safe feeding or speech sound production.
7. It will be necessary for the client to demonstrate a minimum of two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the red Chewy Tube® as a prerequisite for introduction of the yellow. In this case you will be working with both the red and yellow Chewy Tubes® until the client can chew 10 times per side on each.
8. The client must be able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the yellow Chewy Tube® as a prerequisite for introduction of the purple Grabber. When this occurs you will be working on three tubes –both Chewy Tubes®, plus the purple Grabber – until the client can chew 10 times per side on each.
9. Finally, it is necessary for the client to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the purple Grabber as a prerequisite for introduction of the Green Grabber. At this point you will be working on all four tubes until the client can chew 10 times per side on each.
10. If at any time during the practice of these activities the client appears to be seeking additional sensory information, the tip of the Bite Tube can be dipped in ice water, sensory powder, or a highly-flavored liquid or puree to increase awareness and/or acceptance. The decision on which additional sensory stimuli to use should be based upon the client's preferences and dietary limitations.
11. Homework: Establish during the session where your client fails on the hierarchy of difficulty. Practice that step at the highest level of repetitions, 1-10 times per day and a minimum of 3 times per week, until that step has been mastered.

### Step #1

1. Position the client in a stable seating posture, with hands down or at midline.
2. Use the palm of your non-dominant hand to support the jaw. Place the tip of the red Chewy Tube® on the surface of the left lower gum ridge or back molars, extending from the side of the mouth as pictured below. Instruct the client to bite as you model a single bite. If the client is unable to follow the verbal or visual direction, press down gently on the Chewy Tube® to stimulate a munch-chew pattern. As he/she begins to close the jaw, maintain the position but release the pressure.



**Note:** Superimposed jaw support is used to give a slight amount of support to the jaw; it is not intended to hold the jaw or inhibit mobility. Rather it is used as a “sling” to follow the movement of the jaw. This superimposed jaw support may not be used with the yellow Chewy Tube® or either Grabber.

**Note:** If pressure on the jaw does not result in any evidence of jaw closure, the client is not ready for this activity. Instructions for developing the skills necessary to perform this activity can be found in *Assessment and Treatment of the Jaw: Putting it All Together – Sensory, Feeding and Speech*, by Sara Rosenfeld-Johnson, M.S., CCC-SLP.

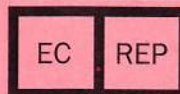
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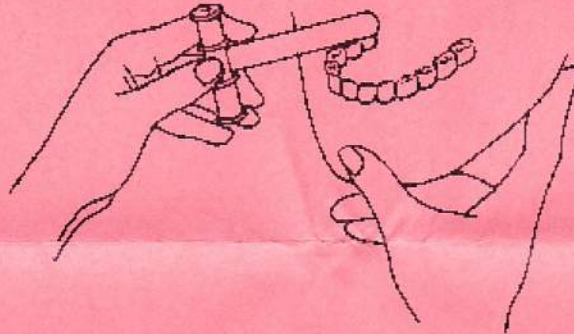
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- While maintaining the position of the Chewy Tube® in your client's mouth, repeat the instruction, "bite-bite-bite," as you model the bite-chew pattern. Continue this procedure until he/she stops biting on the Chewy Tube® or until one of the following compensatory postures is noted: jaw slide or jaw jut, use of a hand or other object to support the jaw, turning the head toward the Chewy Tube®, or refusal to continue with the activity.

**Note:** You should not be using any downward pressure on the jaw after the first successful bite.



- Repeat the task on the right side of the mouth as pictured below:
- Practice the highest number of bite-chews on the red Chewy Tube®, on both sides of the mouth, 1-10 times per day. When the client is able to use controlled up-and-down movements with enough strength to compress the tube 10 times on the left side and 10 times on the right without any evidence of jaw instability or compensatory posturing, he/she can be taught to hold the tube, position it on the back molars, and use it as an alternative to thumbsucking, nail biting, teeth grinding, etc., or to satisfy the need for temporomandibular stimulation.
- When the client is able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the red Chewy Tube®, progress immediately to Step #2 and begin use of the yellow Chewy Tube® in the same practice session.

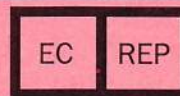
### Step #2

- If the client is not able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the red Chewy Tube®, do not introduce the yellow Chewy Tube at this time. Continue to work on jaw skill development using only the red Chewy Tube®. Once he/she can perform the required task of two controlled chews per side using the red Chewy Tube®, the yellow Chewy Tube® can be introduced.
- If the client is able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the red Chewy Tube®, introduce the yellow Chewy Tube® and follow the directions in Step #1 above. Note that superimposed jaw support should not be used with this therapy tool. Daily practice sessions will then be performed using both the red and yellow Chewy Tubes®.
- Practice the highest number of bite-chews on the yellow Chewy Tube®, on both sides of the mouth, 1-10 times per day. When the client is able to use controlled up-and-down movements with enough strength to compress the tube 10 times on the left side and 10 times on the right without any evidence of jaw instability or compensatory posturing, he/she can be taught to hold the tube, position it on the back molars, and use it as an alternative to thumbsucking, nail biting, teeth grinding, etc., or to satisfy the need for temporomandibular stimulation.

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- When the client is able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the yellow Chewy Tube®, progress immediately to Step #3 and begin use of the purple Grabber in the same practice session.

### Step #3

- If the client is not able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the yellow Chewy Tube®, do not introduce the purple Grabber at this time. Continue to work on jaw skill development using the red and yellow Chewy Tubes®. Once he/she can perform the required task of two controlled chews per side using the yellow Chewy Tube®, the purple Grabber can be introduced.
- If the client is able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the yellow Chewy Tube®, introduce the purple Grabber and follow the directions in Step #1. Again, superimposed jaw support should not be used with this therapy tool. Daily practice sessions will then be performed using the red and yellow Chewy Tubes® and the purple Grabber.
- Practice the highest number of bite-chews on the purple Grabber, on both sides of the mouth, 1-10 times per day. When the client is able to use controlled up-and-down movements with enough strength to compress the tube 10 times on the left side and 10 times on the right without any evidence of jaw instability or compensatory posturing, he/she can be taught to hold the tube, position it on the back molars, and use it as an alternative to thumbsucking, nail biting, teeth grinding, etc., or to satisfy the need for temporomandibular stimulation.
- When the client is able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the purple Grabber, progress immediately to Step #4 and begin use of the green Grabber in the same practice session.

### Step #4

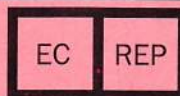
- If the client is not able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the purple Grabber, do not introduce the green Grabber at this time. Continue to work on jaw skill development using the red and yellow Chewy Tubes® and the purple Grabber. Once he/she can perform the required task of two controlled chews per side using the purple Grabber, the green Grabber can be introduced.
- If the client is able to demonstrate two controlled up-and-down bites/compressions on the purple Grabber, introduce the green Grabber and follow the directions in Step #1. Superimposed jaw support should not be used with this therapy tool. Daily practice sessions will then be performed using all four Bite Tubes.
- Practice the highest number of bite-chews on the green Grabber, on both sides of the mouth, 1-10 times per day. When the client is able to use controlled up-and-down movements with enough strength to compress the tube 10 times on the left side and 10 times on the right without any evidence of jaw instability or compensatory posturing, he/she can be taught to hold the tube, position it on the back molars, and use it as an alternative to thumbsucking, nail biting, teeth grinding, etc., or to satisfy the need for temporomandibular stimulation.

**A Note from Sara:** Please work through this program slowly, as muscle skills need time to develop. You are helping to build the foundation for safe feeding and speech clarity, and this foundation is not developed overnight. You may be working on this hierarchy for many months or, in some cases, a year or more. Take your time and think of this as training for an athletic event. Better yet, think of it as a marathon – this is not a sprint to be finished as quickly as possible.

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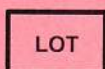
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