Temporomandibular Joint Dysfunction

What is temporomandibular joint dysfunction?
Temporomandibular joint (TMJ) dysfunction is a condition that is characterized by pain and limited ability to talk, eat, or move your jaw because of inflammation, osteoarthritis, hypomobility, hypermobility, or disc displacement.

What are possible signs and symptoms of TMJ dysfunction?
- Pain in the region around the jaw or ear when talking or chewing
- Presence of clicking when opening/closing mouth
- Headaches
- Muscle spasms in facial or neck muscles
- Inability to open mouth

How does physical therapy help?
- Stretching and strengthening
- Postural muscle strengthening
- Manual therapy – massage, mobilization, stretching, myofascial release
- Education about posture, body mechanics, and activity modification
- Modalities – electrical stimulation, ultrasound, cold laser

TMJ Education:
- Stop nail biting, chewing gum, clenching or grinding your teeth
- Rest about 1/3 of the front on the tongue on the roof of the mouth
- Teeth resting position is with your teeth slightly apart
- Lips are lightly together and you are breathing through your nose
- Keep the tip of the tongue on roof of mouth when yawning
- Avoid sleeping on your stomach
- Avoid resting chin on your hands
- Soft diet: avoid hard crunchy foods
- Cut up food into small pieces
- Warm food into small pieces
- Work on posture exercises 5-6x/day.