Exercise guidelines

for joint hypermobility

What exercises are good for joint hypermobility?

Hypermobile joints can be damaged over time. It is important to learn how to protect the joints and avoid pushing them past range of motion. Range of motion is normal joint movement. This will reduce long-term harm.

The patient, family and the therapist will work together in deciding on therapy goals. Therapy will focus on:

- Keeping joints stable.
- Protecting joints.
- Making the muscles that support posture stronger.

Other things you will learn in therapy include:

- Correct posture to protect your joints.
- The right shoes to wear.
- Movements to save energy.
- How to do everyday activities and still manage pain.
- Self-help ideas such as:
  - Pacing activities.
  - Exercises.
  - Relaxation.
- The importance of staying active.
- Why to avoid naps.
- Why to decrease caffeine intake.
- The timing of activity before bedtime.
- The sleep environment. This includes less use of electronics, TV, video games, phones, and gaming systems.

A home exercise program is an important part of therapy. It should be ongoing, varied, and done as part of a daily routine. This will help get the most benefit and prevent pain and injury.

Routine physical activities are helpful as well. Examples include:

- Swimming.
- Pilates, tai chi, and some forms of modified yoga.
- Low impact dance.
- Biking.

Patients should limit high impact activities and repetitive tasks. Therapists will help choose the best activities. Exercises should:

- Be done slowly.
- Use proper alignment.
- Be done **without** holding breath.
- **Not** cause pain.
- Stop **before** the pain starts.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

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