

## Footwear



Supportive footwear is beneficial to children who are hypermobile. Try to ensure that footwear has sturdy support around the heel and an upper that supports the whole foot. Shoes should have a fastening such as laces or buckles to stop the foot moving in the shoe. Slip on shoes should be avoided.

Try to ensure the sole of the shoe is sturdy enough to act as a shock absorber. Lace up boots are often supportive and comfortable.

Other shoes can be worn for short periods or special occasions.

## When to seek help?

Physiotherapy is often useful after an injury to return to everyday activities. If your child is experiencing repeated injury or frequent pain then speak to your GP for advice.

## Contact us

### Children's Physiotherapy Direct

Tel: **0300 421 6980**

[www.ghc.nhs.uk](http://www.ghc.nhs.uk)

0-16 years (or 16-18 in full-time education).

Open Mon-Fri (excluding bank holidays) 9am-12pm.

## Other useful information

### Hypermobility Syndromes Association:

[www.hypermobility.org](http://www.hypermobility.org)

Your views are important to us. If you need advice or have feedback on a community hospital in Gloucestershire, or on our community health and adult social care services, you can contact one of the advisers from our Service Experience team.

All enquiries are completely confidential. You can contact us between 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday. This leaflet can also be supplied in braille, audio format, PDF, large print, easy read and other languages on request.

**Telephone:** **0300 421 8313** (answerphone available outside office hours)

**Email:** [experience@ghc.nhs.uk](mailto:experience@ghc.nhs.uk)

**Write to:** **Patient and Carer Experience Team,  
Gloucestershire Health and Care  
NHS Foundation Trust, Edward Jenner  
Court, 1010 Pioneer Avenue, Gloucester  
Business Park, Brockworth,  
Gloucester GL3 4AW**



## Hypermobility in Children



## Information for patients

## What is Hypermobility

Hypermobility is when ligaments allow more movement at the joints. The shape of the joint can also influence how much the joint moves.

Hypermobility may affect just one joint or many joints. It is not an illness or disease and is a normal variation.

Hypermobility is commonly seen in young children. Most children are flexible but some more so than others. Between 25-50% of children under 10 are considered hypermobile. Most children will get less flexible as they get older and should improve as the child's strength and co-ordination develop.



## Common concerns

Many children who are hypermobile do not experience any problems. However, some children may:

- Take longer to achieve skills such as crawling, walking and running
- Appear clumsy and fall frequently
- Have flat feet
- Have clicky joints
- Bruise easily
- Have aching limbs/joints, particularly after increased activity
- Fatigue.

It is believed that the problems mentioned above are the result of poor muscle strength and stamina as the muscles are required to work harder to control increased joint movement. It is not caused directly by hypermobility.

## What can help?

It is important to focus on being healthy, strong and fit. Good muscle strength is needed to stabilise hypermobile joints and protect against injury.

Encourage normal everyday activities such as swimming, cycling, PE and dance. It is good to enjoy a variety of activities rather than just one to strengthen a variety of muscle groups.

## Pacing

If your child gets muscle pain following activity, do not stop them from being active as this is required to build muscle strength. Instead, pace the activity so that it builds gradually to a level that is manageable.

Try not to do too much activity in one day. Instead, space it out, little and often, throughout the week. The pain from hypermobility is often the result of muscle fatigue.

## Pain management

A warm bath or hot water bottle may help soothe the muscle pain caused by fatigue.

A comfort tool box can be developed with the child with a collection of activities and interventions such as items to facilitate distraction, relaxation tools and exercise.

## Posture

The way that you sit or stand can put added pressure on your joints and muscles and result in poor use of certain muscle group such as your core muscles.

When sitting on a chair the thighs and spine should be supported by the chair. The thighs should be horizontal and the feet flat on the floor.



A sloped writing surface can improve neck position. When sitting on the floor avoid the 'w' sitting position as this puts increased pressure on the hips and knee joints.