



**NATIONWIDE  
CHILDREN'S**

*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™*

**Helping Hand™**

## **Joint Protection**

Following basic rules to protect your joints can lower your pain and make everyday activities more enjoyable.

### **Body Position**

- Change positions often. If you are standing for a long time, shift your weight from one foot to the other every few minutes. If you are sitting for a long time, move your arms and legs to a different angle every few minutes. Take breaks to stretch.
- When grasping items with handles, grip them softly.

### **Tools Make Jobs Easier**

- Use a step-stool to help you reach overhead.
- Use wide pens and handles.
- Use rubber grip pads to help open jars and cans.

### **Organize**

- Keep all homework supplies in one area.
- Store frequently used items in easy-to-reach areas.

### **Pain and Tiredness**

- Pay attention to how you are feeling.
- Plan rest breaks.
- Use heat for pain relief for 5 to 10 minutes at a time. Try a heating pad, a warm wet towel, paraffin, or warm rice bag. Be sure to follow all safety precautions for any heating items you choose.

## **Prioritize**

- Do your most important activities first.
- Finish homework before video games.
- Finish chores before texting or using the computer.

## **Splinting**

- Splints can help keep joints comfortable during sleep.
- Splints can stretch tight joints.
- Splints stabilize joints that easily over-stretch.
- Ask your doctor or therapist if splints may be helpful for you.

## **Exercise Programs**

- Exercise can help joints move easier and decrease pain.
- Stronger muscles help take stress off joints.
- A therapist can help you find an exercise program that is just right for you.
- If a certain exercise causes more pain or stiffness, stop doing it until you can speak with your therapist personally about it.