

Exercise and Splint Time

Exercises/splints can be a major part of the treatment for different types of arthritis. Just like taking medicine, getting your child to do exercises and/or wear splints can also become a conflict. Following are helpful hints for doing exercises and/or wearing splints.

Make the time as pleasant as possible

Allow your child some choice in where they do their exercises (i.e., in their room, in the bathtub, watching TV).

Let your child choose the order for doing different exercises (hands/wrists exercises first, then knees) or the order for putting on splints. They may want to change the order each day.

Do the exercises to music (any type/some tapes are available for younger children)

Involve other family members in exercise sessions.

Make an exercise book, flip chart, or even video tape your child exercising and then let him/her watch themselves on TV.

Allow your child to decorate their splints (color straps like zebras, or put stickers on, etc.).

Let your child put their splint on themselves.

Older children/teenagers may want to try and camouflage splints.

Make a chart with smile face, hearts, checks, etc., each time your child does his/her exercises.

Try to make things as fun as possible. Your therapist may also have some creative ideas. Sometimes it is helpful to make a chart like this one:

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Biking	♪☺♥	√	♥♥♥♥	☀☺♪	☺	♪☀♥	☺♪
Quads	√☀	√♥☺		♥☺	♪♥	♥♥	