

# Advice sheet

## Hypermobility

Hypermobility is commonly referred to as ligamentous laxity or being 'double jointed'!

### What is a ligament?

Ligaments are strong non elastic bands which join bones together, support the joints and prevent the joint from moving too far (dislocating).

### What causes ligamentous laxity?

Ligamentous laxity is also referred to as joint hypermobility. Ligamentous laxity often occurs because the connective tissues in the joints and ligaments are particularly loose and stretchy. Generalised joint hypermobility affecting all joints is very common in children and this may change as a child grows.

### Children with hypermobility may experience:

- Poor balance and co ordination
- Poor posture
- Delayed motor skills (sitting, crawling walking)
- Pain
- Fatigue and reduced stamina

### Activity advice

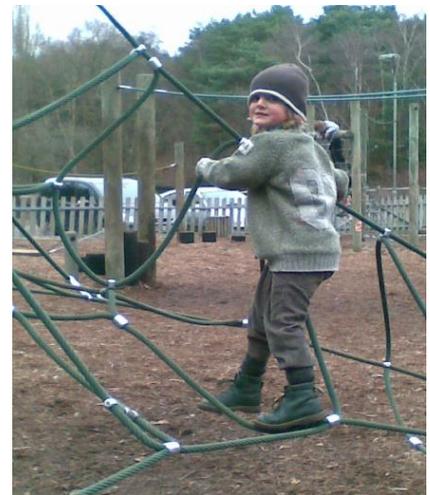
Below are some suggestions of activities which may help to build and maintain muscle strength and help protect joints. The best way of supporting these children is by including lots of gross motor activities incorporated into a daily routine. Little and often is better than prolonged periods of exercise, so take this into account when out and about and if using pushchairs.

### Gross motor activities:

- Swimming
- Cycling
- Walking
- Playing in the park
- Soft play
- Ball games
- General activities to promote gross motor skills (an advice sheet for this is available on the website)

### Fine Motor Activities:

- Experiment using different size and styles of pens, pencils and crayons
- Playing with Lego, Play Dough, model making etc. will increase finger strength
- A sloped writing board and a sloped cushion to sit on can sometimes help improve a sitting position.
- When using computers, short rests and stretching whilst working helps.



Children with hypermobility may find some activities more effortful and tiring. It is important that they are encouraged, where possible, to participate in the same activities as their friends and maintain an active lifestyle. However, they will probably need shorter bursts of activity with regular rest periods to build their stamina and manage their energy levels.

### Footwear:

Most children with hypermobility would benefit from a shoe that provides good support around the heel and a secure fastening.

**If you continue to have concerns regarding your child please contact your Health Visitor or General Practitioner.**