

HYPERMOBILITY

WHAT IS IT?

Hypermobility is a condition when the joint moves too much, and sometimes in more than one direction. This increased movement affects the joint's ability to function correctly. Frequently, this extra movement causes muscle spasms which are painful. Individuals then start to avoid movement and develop compensations which may cause more problems after time. Hypermobility is on one end of the joint movement spectrum; and within this category, people can range from mild to severe. In severe cases, hypermobility can require surgery to avoid dislocation.

THE TWO WAYS IT HAPPENS

1. In one joint or joints after a fall, accident, or injury (i.e. shoulder dislocation)
2. A person's natural flexibility which is present in all of their joints (i.e. being double jointed or really flexible)

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE HYPERMOBILITY?

You MAY have hypermobility if you can do the following movements:



WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

DO

1. Move, but correctly – the details are important – your PT can help you find out if you are moving correctly
2. Focus on strength – the more strength you have the less strain on the joint
3. Lie down and shorten the muscle if it is painful and spasms
4. Stand with equal weight on both feet
5. Sit with good posture
6. Use arch support and/or supportive shoes

DON'T

1. Stretch your painful areas
2. "Pop" your joints
3. Work in a bent over position
4. Perform crunches or sit-ups
5. Cross your legs
6. Sit on soft furniture

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXERCISE AND STRENGTHENING

1. Use small movements
2. Use weight that you can control, more is not better
3. Focus on stability and controlled movement
4. Stop before you get to the end of the range of an exercise
5. Make sure you have a balance program
6. If you do yoga; emphasize strength, stabilization, and meditation aspects and not the stretching aspect
7. Your physical therapist can ensure you are moving correctly with a balanced program

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