

Tips for Exercising with Joint Hypermobility



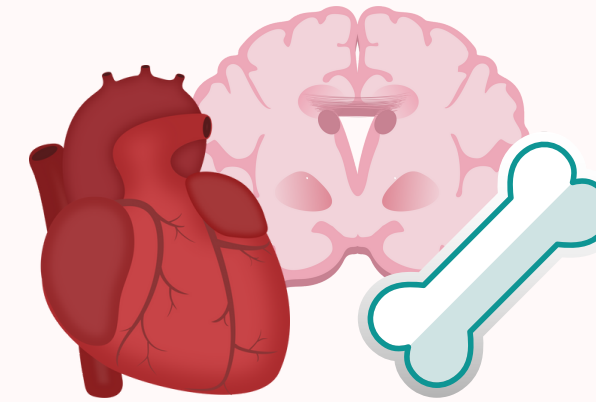
Benefits of Exercise



Better mood & decreased anxiety



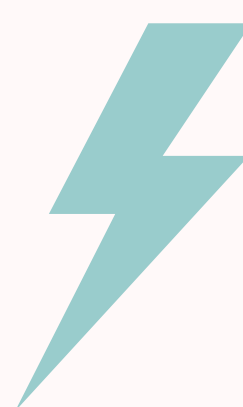
Decreased risk of injury & increased joint stability



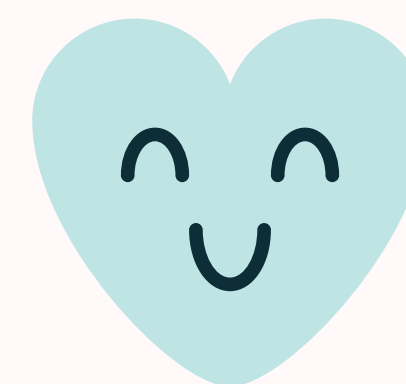
Protect your heart, bones, and brain



Increased sleep quality & decreased insomnia



More energy & less fatigue



Increased quality of life & lifespan, decreased pain

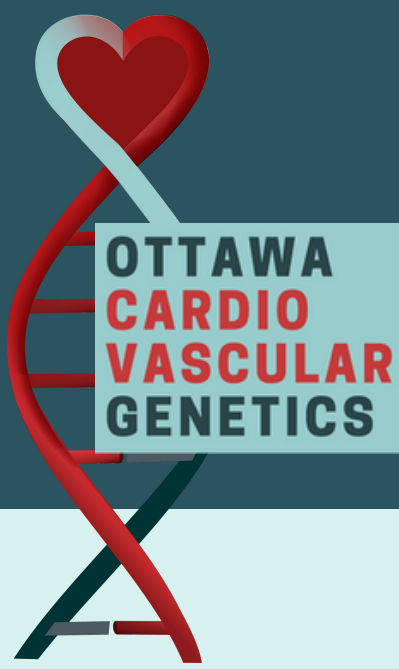
For an in-depth review of the benefits of exercise follow this link or scan the above QR code:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUalnS6HIGo&feature=youtu.be>

Yes it is hard, but it is worth it!

Don't get discouraged! It can be hard to exercise after a period of illness or inactivity. Remember: **taking two steps forward, one step back still leaves you a step ahead!**

The Goals

- **Well balanced strength** so your tendons, muscles, and ligaments “pull” equally in all directions. It's important that if you strengthen one muscle, you also work on the opposing muscle!
- **Strong muscles** to hold your joints; you need more strength to stabilize a hypermobile joint:
 - Loose joints are “anchored” with a **strong core**. A strong core will protect your back!
 - You need a **full body program**: it isn't enough to focus on the joint that hurts.
- **Cardiovascular fitness** to decrease fatigue, improve mood, and protect your heart and brain.
- **Improved balance**: people with unstable joints often have poor proprioception and are more “clumsy”. Proprioception is the ability to know where your body is in space. The stronger and fitter you get, the less clumsy you will be. Balancing exercises also help reduce the risk of falls.
- **Why is it important to address different exercise goals?** Just like you need to eat different food groups, each type of exercise has different benefits for your body!



Tips for Exercising with Joint Hypermobility



Canadian Minimal Recommendations

- **Children (3-4 years):** At least 180 minutes per day with at least 60 minutes (preferably more!) energetic play.
- **Youth (5-17 years):** At least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise per day
- **Adults:** At least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise per week

For more information visit csepguidelines.ca or scan the above QR code.

Recommended Exercises

Low impact activities such as swimming (#1!), walking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, cycling on a well-adjusted bike, and elliptical machines.

People with joint hypermobility should also be following a strengthening program, including core exercises, to help their muscles compensate for the job their joints are not doing.

For the full Canadian Guidelines scan the QR code above or visit
<https://csepguidelines.ca/>

Types of Exercise to Avoid

High-impact activities are more likely to cause joint pain, such as running, combat sports, and sports with collisions such as hockey, football or rugby.

Restrictions if you have an aneurysm or condition predisposing to an aneurysm

Ultimately, your exercise restrictions will be decided by your cardiologist, cardiac surgeon, or vascular surgeon. Restrictions may include combat and contact sports, exercises that sharply raise blood pressure (lifting weights or high intensity exercise), and blowing against resistance (scuba diving or playing a wind instrument)

A Few More Important Things to Remember

- Most people use exercise and/or physiotherapy to recover after an injury, but with joint hypermobility you need an ongoing exercise program to compensate for the job your ligaments aren't doing. **Use an exercise program to get to a healthier baseline and to maintain it!**
- As you are hypermobile, you can likely "cheat your way" into an exercise that looks just the same, but engages the wrong muscle groups. This will result in more pain, not less. **You need to have perfect form in your exercises.** If you can't do it using the right muscle groups, ask your physiotherapist/trainer for an easier version until you build up strength to do it correctly.
- Adults with joint hypermobility often need to sleep more than average, typically 9 hours/night. **After all, if your muscles need to work harder all day long, they need to recover!** Children and youth with joint hypermobility need even more sleep for their body to recover and to grow.