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Hypermobile joints

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Illustrations



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Joint hypermobility; Loose joints

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Hypermobile joints are joints that move beyond the normal range with little effort. The joints that are most commonly hypermobile are the elbows, wrists, fingers, and knees.

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Hypermobile joints occur in some very rare medical conditions, but can also occur in otherwise healthy and normal children. Children generally tend to be more flexible than adults, but those with hypermobile joints are capable of flexing and extending beyond normally observed limits for that particular joint. The movement is accomplished without undue force and without discomfort. Children with hypermobile joints also frequently have flat feet.

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- Ehlers-Danlos syndrome
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- Morquio syndrome
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There is no specific care for the hypermobility. In many cases, people with hypermobile joints are at an increased risk for [joint dislocation](#) and other problems, and extra care may be needed to protect the joints. Consult your health care provider for specific recommendations.

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- The ability to move a joint suddenly changes or decreases
- A joint suddenly appears misshapen (different than usual for that person)
- There is a loss of ability to use an arm or leg, or there is pain with movement of a joint

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Hypermobile joints often accompany other symptoms that, taken together, define a specific syndrome or condition. A diagnosis is based on a family history, medical history, and a complete physical exam.

Medical history questions that help document hypermobile joints in detail may include:

- When did you first notice the problem?
- Is it getting worse or more noticeable?
- Are there any other symptoms, such as swelling or redness around the joint?
- Is there any history of joint dislocation, difficulty walking, or difficulty using the arms?

The physical exam will include detailed examination of the muscles and skeleton. The joints may be moved to determine the direction and extent of mobility.

Further tests will depend on what condition is suspected.

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Updated by: Thomas N. Joseph, MD, Private Practice specializing in Orthopaedics, subspecialty Foot and Ankle, Camden Bone & Joint, Camden, SC. Review provided by VeriMed Healthcare Network.



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