

# How to reduce stress on your Joints

## Patient Information

Occupational Therapy Department



The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link:  
<https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets> or scan the QR code.

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As joints are often painful due to arthritis or joint conditions, reducing stress on these joints can help reduce the pain and reduce the likelihood of problems progressing.

There are many ways to reduce strain and stresses on joints below are a variety of suggestions for different joints:

### **Ideas to reduce strain through your hands, wrists, and elbows**

- When completing tasks use several joints - for example lifting items with two hands instead of one.
- Use gadgets which save unnecessary strain on your joints - for example jar openers, ring pull aids.
- Make use of electrical devices which reduce the strain through your joints - for example – electric tin opener, food processor, electric toothbrush and power assisted tools.
- Don't lift unnecessary weight reduce the size of the load by making more trips or slide objects such as crockery on work surfaces rather than lifting.
- If replacing household or DIY items look for light weight products.
- Where possible use larger joints - for example when getting up from a low chair try not to push through the small joints but use your forearms if carrying a bag avoid carrying through the small finger joints.
- Use tools and utensils with larger grips as they will be easier to hold.
- Are all tasks necessary? Can tasks be eliminated? An example could be ironing towels or sheets.

### **Ideas to reduce strain through your hips, knees, and feet**

- When standing always ensure weight is distributed evenly between both legs, so one knee and hip is not taking too much weight.
- Sit down to complete tasks - for example sit at a work surface or sit to iron or to complete DIY or gardening.
- Wear shoes with thick, soft soles which act as a shock absorber to reduce strain through the small joints of the feet.
- Plan activities in advance to avoid unnecessary journeys - for example up and down the stairs, duplicating cleaning equipment up and down stairs can be useful.

- Pace yourself so you are not completing all the physically demanding jobs at once - such as ironing, gardening, or housework.

### **Ideas to reduce strain through your back**

- Think about your positioning and posture when completing tasks avoid overreaching to retrieve objects, and if bending to the floor make sure you bend your knees not your back.
- If reaching to the floor is difficult, gadgets are available to help with dressing or reaching down to the floor.
- Use long handled tools in the garden or for completing household tasks.

Each day allow time for activities you enjoy and time for exercise. If someone offers to help with a task, try not to feel guilty about accepting help. Reducing strain on your joints is aimed at making sure you are able to continue completing the tasks you want to do!

### **Contact Information**

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The name of your Occupational Therapist is: .....

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## Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

## Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am until 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager  
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## Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



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## How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see patient information leaflet, Ref. **Corp 006** How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

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