



Dr Wolfgang Muller (Consultant Paediatrician)

Parent Information Guide:

Benign Joint Hypermobility in Children

What is Benign Hypermobility?

Benign Joint Hypermobility means that a child's **joints are more flexible than usual**. This is often called being "double-jointed." It is very common in children and usually **not a sign of disease**. Most children with hypermobility have **no serious problems** and grow out of it as they get older.

What Causes It?

Hypermobility happens when the tissues (like ligaments) that support joints are **looser or stretchier than normal**. This allows joints to bend further than most people's.

Some children are more likely to be hypermobile if:

- It runs in the family
 - They are girls
 - They are growing quickly
-

Common Signs of Hypermobility

- Very flexible fingers, knees, or elbows
 - Sitting in a "W" position or squatting comfortably for long periods
 - "Flat feet" or ankles that roll inward
 - Tiring more quickly during activity
 - Aching joints after sports or long walks
 - Poor coordination or clumsiness (sometimes)
-



Dr Wolfgang Muller (Consultant Paediatrician)

Is It Harmful?

In most cases, **no**. Many children with hypermobility are very active and do well in sports like gymnastics or dance. Some may have **mild joint pain** or get tired more easily, but this usually improves with age.

How Can I Help My Child?

- ✓ Encourage **gentle, regular exercise** like swimming or cycling
 - ✓ Support your child in doing **muscle-strengthening activities** (a physiotherapist can help)
 - ✓ Make sure they wear **supportive shoes**
 - ✓ Give **paracetamol or ibuprofen** if they are in pain
 - ✓ Help them take breaks during long walks or activities
-

Management Tips

- Encourage your child to take part in **symmetrical and whole-body activities**, such as:
 - **Swimming**
 - **Walking or running**
 - **Rowing**
 - **Cycling**
 - Promote **low-impact and balanced sports** that help build strength and stability.
 - Avoid **overstretching** or activities that place excessive strain on the joints, especially those encouraging extreme flexibility.
 - Use **physiotherapy** to support posture and muscle tone if needed.
 - Allow time for **rest and recovery**, particularly after active play or sports.
 - If your child has flat feet or ankle pain, consider **orthotic supports**.
-



Dr Wolfgang Muller (Consultant Paediatrician)

When to See a Doctor

Speak to your GP if:

- Your child has **frequent or severe joint pain**
- Joints are **dislocating or giving way**
- There are other symptoms like **skin that bruises easily, tummy pain, or very stretchy skin**

The doctor may check their joints using something called the **Beighton score** to assess flexibility.

Will My Child Grow Out of It?

Most children become **less flexible as they grow**, and any related pain or fatigue usually improves with age. With the right support and activity, most children stay active and healthy.

Key Points to Remember

- Benign hypermobility is **common and not dangerous**
- Most children with hypermobility do **not need treatment**
- Keep your child active and help them build **strong muscles** to support their joints
- See your doctor if there are any unusual symptoms

For more advice, speak with your GP or a physiotherapist.

Written by: Dr W Muller

Date: 19/04/2025