

Joint Arthropathy and Bleed Management

This handout reviews:

- Common signs and symptoms of **joint arthropathy** and **bleeds**
- P.R.I.C.E.
- Ways to care for ongoing soreness of joints
- Activity and work recommendations
- When to call IHTC physical therapy

Signs and symptoms of joint arthropathy (joint damage):

- Ongoing pain with movement and sometimes at rest
- Less ability to move a joint which does not get better
- Weakness of the muscles around the joint
- Swelling around the joint which does not change much
- Stiffness (especially after waking up)

Signs and symptoms of joint and muscle bleeds:

- Pain
- Difficulty moving the involved area
- Swelling over the involved area
- Warmth over the involved area
- Difficulty walking or standing
- Bruising or redness

To treat a bleed, infuse with factor as recommended by the doctor and use P.R.I.C.E.:

- P:** Protection (like slings or crutches)
- R:** Rest
- I:** Ice or cold to the area to help with pain
- C:** Compression (wrap the area with an elastic bandage)
- E:** Elevation (raise the area higher than your heart)

Even a minor injury (like twisting an ankle, pulling a muscle, or being hit in a muscle) can cause a joint or muscle bleed.

To treat ongoing (chronic) joint pain and limited joint motion *not* caused by a bleed:

- First, follow the medicine plan set by your doctor
- Support involved joint with bracing or splinting
- Use adaptive equipment like reachers and dressing aids
- Perform gentle joint motion as recommended by Physical Therapist
- Use a walking aid like a cane or walker



Joint Arthropathy and Bleed Management *(continued)*

Physical activity helps keep joints and muscles healthy.

- Staying active keeps your muscles strong, which helps support your joints. The CDC recommends:
 - ◆ Kids: 60 minutes of activity every day
 - ◆ Adults: 150 minutes (2 and a half hours) of physical activity each week
- When choosing an activity or type of work, think about your joint health. The physical therapist can help you decide on safe activities.
 - ◆ Examples:
 - » If you have a “bad” ankle or knee, it may be best to avoid long periods of standing, walking, or climbing ladders.
 - » If you have a sore elbow or shoulder, it may be difficult to do repetitive work like lifting or hammering.
- Water activities like swimming and water aerobics have lower impact on joints.
- Use a bicycle helmet or other sports safety equipment to protect yourself from injury.
- Avoid contact sports and activities (like football or hockey).



Contact IHTC physical therapy if you have:

- Increased joint pain, swelling, and/or tightness
- New joint or muscle pain and swelling
- More difficulty performing work duties or activities of daily living
- Trouble walking, staying balanced, or doing activities you enjoy
- Questions about orthopedic procedures like joint surgery