

Joint Protection Care

Rational for Joint Protection

The goal of joint protection is to decrease joint stress, pain, and inflammation while preserving joint integrity, which is essential for maintaining hand function. This is achieved through patient education, self-management, exercise, splint wear, adaptive devices, and modalities, along with problem-solving to promote behaviour modification.



Respect Pain

- Do not ignore pain
- Monitor for pain during activities
- Modify activities (frequency, intensity, load, duration)



Simplify Work and Conserve Energy

- Make changes to your everyday routine
- Plan and prioritise your day
- Keep things organised
- Take scheduled breaks in between work
- Keep frequently used items within reach



Avoid Prolonged Rest

- Avoid maintaining the same joint position.
- Exercise to maintain strength and range of motion



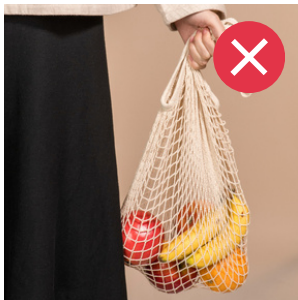
Use the Minimum Amount of Force to Complete the Job

- Avoid activities requiring prolonged squeezing, pinching and gripping
- Replaced screw-on covers with flip-lids
- Use a spinning mop instead of your hands
- Use the washing machine instead of handwashing



Distribute the Load

- Use stronger joints i.e. forearm and shoulder to carry heavy items
- Use two hands instead of one hand to carry heavy items



Exercise

- Three main types of hand exercises play an important role in maintaining or increasing strength and range of motion.
 - Aerobic – Raises heart rate and blood flow
 - Resistance – Makes muscles stronger
 - Stretching - Makes muscles/joints move more easily



Contributed by Occupational Therapy, Rehabilitation, Allied Health Services

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