



# HOW DO I MANAGE MY CHILD'S JIA FLARE?

## IMPORTANT:

***PLEASE DO NOT make any medication changes on your own.***

*This will only complicate a good evaluation of your child and possibly delay adequate control of your child's arthritis*

You may give your child Tylenol for pain as directed on the package. **No Ibuprofen, Motin, Aleve or other over-the-counter medication unless your Rheumatology Provider says it is okay.**

**Be prepared to answer the following questions:**

- Does your child have a fever? (take temperature with thermometer)
- Are there any signs of illness (ie. cough, sore throat, ear ache, vomiting or diarrhea)?
- What medications is your child on?
- When was the last time you were seen in the Rheum office?

## FIRST:

**Contact your Rheumatology Provider to report what is going on and get further directions.**

Your Rheumatology Provider will want to see your child for a thorough evaluation before making any decisions about further testing (ie. labs, x-rays, MRI's et.) or medication changes are made. However, if you have been seen recently and medication changes were made, they may offer you a short course of Prednisone to bridge your child until the new medications can reach their maximum effect. This will usually only be needed for a few days, usually 3-5 days. This tends to be safer and more effective than using "pain" medications because your child's pain is due to inflammation and the Prednisone will help decrease inflammation leading to decreased pain and increased movement.

Warm showers, tub baths or swimming in a heated pool can be soothing to inflamed joints. Swimming and playing in a warm pool will also encourage movement of all joints. It is like home Physical Therapy which is always good for children with arthritis. "Hot tubs" or Jacuzzi's are only to be used with pre-teen and teens due to the higher temperatures that are commonly used and the potential for dehydration from perspiring while in the tub.

## CHILDREN MUST BE SUPERVISED AT ALL TIMES WHEN IN BATHTUBS, SWIMMING POOLS OR JACUZZI/HOT TUBS.

Warm water soaks just for hands, feet and ankles are also soothing to sore joints. You can use a home foot spa if you have one or just use a dishpan.

If you are currently receiving PT or OT you can call your therapist to see if they can offer you warm compresses with good stretching or paraffin hand treatments. Heating pads and electric blankets can be used with school-age and older children with **EXTREME CAUTION** and supervision because they can burn a child's skin much easier than an adult's.