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Joint Protection

Patient name: _____ Admission: _____

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- I. Definition: Joint protection is a means of using your joints wisely. Joint protection does not mean eliminating use of that joint.**
- A. Principle 1: Use the strongest or largest joint possible to accomplish a task.
Example: A doorknob extender allows you to open the door with the palm of the hand instead of with fingers.
 - B. Principle 2: Distribute the load over several joints. Example: Carry an object by using two hands instead of one.
 - C. Principle 3: Use each joint in its most stable and functional position. Example: To pick up an object, make sure that you face it directly to avoid twisting the trunk.
 - D. Principle 4: Use good body mechanics. Example: To lift objects from the ground, bend your legs instead of your back: pick up the object, holding it as close to your body as possible and rise, letting your leg muscles do the work.
 - E. Principle 5: Reduce the effort required to do the job. Example: Use wheels to transport. Utility carts, tea tables, and shopping carts are just a few examples.
 - F. Principle 6: Avoid prolonged periods of maintaining the same joint position. Example: Alternate between sitting and standing positions.
 - G. Principle 7: Encourage full and complete motions during daily activities. Example: Reach as high as possible when washing windows.
 - H. Principle 8: Avoid positions and activities leading to possible joint deformities. Example: Sleeping with pillows under the knees should be avoided unless otherwise advised.
 - 1. Principle 8a: Avoid excessive pressure against the back of the fingers, the pads

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- of the thumb, and the tip of each finger.
Example: When using spray cans or bottles, push down with the palm of the hand instead of the thumb tip.
- 2. Principle 8b: Avoid tight grasps on objects and keep hand open whenever possible. Example: Foam padding added to such articles as a toothbrush, pen, razor, fork, or comb will increase the size of the handle. The larger the grip, the less tension required to maintain your hold on these objects.
- I. Principle 9: Organize your work. Example: Combine several errands in one trip whenever possible, especially if climbing stairs is involved.
- J. Principle 10: Balance work with rest. Example: Schedule frequent rest periods during the day. Alternate heavy and light work tasks.
- K. Principle 11: Use efficient storage. Example: Determine the easy way to reach areas and use them for the most frequently used supplies.
- L. Principle 12: Eliminate unnecessary tasks. Example: Use convenience foods or prepare food in the easiest manner possible. For example, bake potatoes instead of mashing them.

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