

## Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy and Physical Therapy

Physical therapy helps children with DMD have independence in their daily activities, stay safe, keep up with their peers, use their healthy muscle function as best as they can, protect their muscles from breaking down because of too much activity, find the right activities to keep them moving, keep their muscles from getting too tight, make sure their breathing stays strong, get equipment, and make changes at school so that their environment is accessible.

Some things to think about and talk to your child's Physical Therapist about are:

### - **Protecting your child from muscle breakdown because of too much activity**

A warning sign that they have done too much activity is that their urine is a dark golden or brown color. Make sure that they always take more rest breaks and do not exercise so much that they feel overly tired.



### - **Finding the right activities to keep your child moving**

The best activities for children with DMD are pool activities, cycling, T-ball, and adapted teams of sports that they are interested in playing. Standing or walking for 2-3 hours or more every day is best for children with DMD.



### - **Keeping your child's muscles from getting too tight**

Stretching should be done every day to make sure their muscles stay lengthened. A Physical Therapist can help you learn how to help your child stretch and which muscles to stretch. Splints that keep your child's ankles in a stretched position should be worn every night while they sleep.



### - **Making sure your child's breathing stays strong**

To keep their breathing muscles strong for as long as possible, games that require them to blow things like cotton balls or ping pong balls across the table should be started as young as possible. Other ideas for keeping breathing strong is blowing bubbles or playing a musical wind instrument like a harmonica or recorder.



### - **Changing activities or places so that your child is as safe as possible**

Safety is important on the playground, using stairs, and when getting up and down from the floor. Strategies that need less energy should be used, like walking up steps sideways, sitting in a chair during floor time, or moving from the floor onto a lower box before into a chair. Changes around school and at home can be made to make it easier for your child to do things on their own.



## Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy Resources



### **Organization Resources:**

Muscular Dystrophy Association - <https://www.mda.org>  
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy - <https://www.parentprojectmd.org>  
NC Vocational Rehabilitation Services - <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/dvrs>  
Special Olympics - <https://www.specialolympics.org>  
Treat NMD Neuromuscular Network - <http://www.treat-nmd.eu>  
World Duchenne Organization - <https://worldduchenne.org>

### **Recommended resources from Muscular Dystrophy Association:**

Services - <https://www.mda.org/services>  
Resource List - <https://www.mda.org/care/resource-list>  
Caregiver Resources - <https://www.mda.org/care/resource-list/caregiver-resources>  
MDA Resource Center - <https://www.mda.org/care/mda-resource-center>  
Summer Camp - <https://www.mda.org/summer-camp>  
Quest Magazine - <https://www.mda.org/quest>  
MDA Care Center Team - <https://www.mda.org/care/mda-care-center-team>  
DMD Information - <https://www.mda.org/disease/duchenne-muscular-dystrophy>  
DMD Fact Sheet -  
[https://www.mda.org/sites/default/files/2019/03/Duchenne\\_Muscular\\_Dystrophy\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](https://www.mda.org/sites/default/files/2019/03/Duchenne_Muscular_Dystrophy_Fact_Sheet.pdf)  
Facts About DMD Booklet -  
[https://www.mda.org/sites/default/files/publications/Facts\\_DMD-BMD\\_P-211\\_0.pdf](https://www.mda.org/sites/default/files/publications/Facts_DMD-BMD_P-211_0.pdf)  
North Carolina Resource List -  
[https://www.mda.org/sites/default/files/Guide\\_StateResource-NorthCarolina.pdf](https://www.mda.org/sites/default/files/Guide_StateResource-NorthCarolina.pdf)  
Charlotte, NC MDA Clinic - <https://www.mda.org/clinic/carolinas-medical-center>  
Charlotte, NC MDA Office - <https://www.mda.org/office/charlotte>

### **Recommended resources from Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy:**

For Newly Diagnosed -  
<https://www.parentprojectmd.org/care/for-families/for-newly-diagnosed/>  
Thing To Do Now -  
<https://www.parentprojectmd.org/care/for-families/for-newly-diagnosed/things-to-do-now/>  
Talking About Neuromuscular Disorders with Your Child -  
[https://www.parentprojectmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Talking\\_About\\_Duchenne\\_Poysky.pdf](https://www.parentprojectmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Talking_About_Duchenne_Poysky.pdf)  
DMD and Me Children's Book -  
[https://www.parentprojectmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/DMD\\_and\\_Me.pdf](https://www.parentprojectmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/DMD_and_Me.pdf)  
Care Guide for Families -  
[https://www.parentprojectmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/CareGuideForFamilies\\_2018.pdf](https://www.parentprojectmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/CareGuideForFamilies_2018.pdf)

