



Evelina Children's
Heart Organisation



Physical activity and sport for children with Congenital Heart Disease

It is vital for your child's health and fitness that they do participate in some physical activity and/or sport, but tailored to their individual needs and abilities. We have compiled a list of questions (see overleaf) to help you ensure that you get the correct up-to-date advice for your child. You can download this document, print it off and take with you to every Outpatient appointment with your child's Cardiologist. You will then have this simple reminder with you - you can tick off each question and make notes as you go along.

Make a note of the date and keep in a safe place for future reference. It may also be useful to pass on to your child's school.

Heart Children often don't take enough exercise because:

- Concerns about individual cardiac anatomy & physiology and differences in how the heart & circulation might work during exercise
- Habitual low level physical activity
- Exercise not encouraged or allowed in childhood due to over-protection by parents or school

Public health guidelines for children state:

- Recommend 60 minutes (daily total, it can be done in 15 minute chunks) of moderate level activity on most days of the week (minimum of 5).
- 'Moderate' level means enough to make you breathe harder (bit 'puffed out') & feel warmer.



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Contact ECHO

To visit our website, please type in www.echo-evelina.org.uk
ECHO P.O. Box 5015, Brighton BN50 9JR

Registered Charity no. 287475

Questions

Is it safe for my child to undertake physical exercise? YES NO

How often? _____

How much? _____

What type? _____

Cardiovascular exercise? _____

Static/weight or resistance exercise? _____

Specific types of activity my child should avoid? _____

Contact sports? YES NO

Weight lifting? YES NO

Martial Arts? YES NO

Trampolining? YES NO

Cross country/long distance running type sports? YES NO

Any others? _____

If not what can they do? _____

Will he/she be able to self-limit? YES NO

How would he/she know when to stop? _____

How can exercise activities be adapted to allow my child's participation? _____

REMEMBER:

Sport should be something your child enjoys! Remember the 'Talk Test' rule:

- He/she should still be able to speak when exercising
- If he/she has enough breath to sing they need to work harder!
- If he/she is too breathless to speak they need to stop & rest...

ALSO – PARENTS SHOULD ALWAYS SEEK ADVICE IN ADVANCE OF VISITS TO THEME PARKS AS THERE ARE SOME RIDES/ATTRACTIONS WHICH ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR SOME HEART CHILDREN, AND WHICH SHOULD, THEREFORE, BE AVOIDED.

