

**HAPPY  
1/2 HOUR**

*with an expert in haemophilia care!*

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## **“Physiotherapy for people with inhibitors”**

**with Piet de Kleijn, physiotherapist, Van Creveldkliniek, Utrecht, The Netherlands**

# **PREVENTION of injuries**

### **When do we start physiotherapy? What is the best age?**

As a child you are dependent on your parents and hopefully they offer you an active life-style. **Active children have better chances of normal motor development.**



One item often misunderstood in physiotherapy is muscle strength: you have to be very strong. **Children do not have to be very strong, they need to be aware of their body dimensions and abilities and resourceful.** So, normal motor development is key.

### **General prevention also means optimal functional recovery after every bleed.**

This is essential in haemophilia care. We do not have to explain here why this is especially important for inhibitor patients. **If not, they will get worse and worse after each bleed.**

Also, as parents of a child, but also as an adult with inhibitors, you have to know what you are capable of. **The key is that after each bleed you want to reach the same activity level as before.** Sometimes you need guidance, or coaching from a physiotherapist, and sometimes not.

**In inhibitor patients monitoring needs to be more intense.** In this way, no remaining physical problem can escape from that persons with an inhibitor themselves or from the doctor/team. **Monitoring needs to be assessed in a very structured and careful manner.** For example, if your child does not extend one knee fully and gets used to walking with a flexed knee (tiptoeing), then after a few months already it is almost impossible to correct. So, you need to monitor every acute situation, and when there is no acute situation, **you also need to monitor the child at least every six months.**



### **Prevention example**

We are trying to implement preventive measurements into our out-clinic for children with haemophilia in the Netherlands. **One of the elements is an application (app) that shows you how to use crutches or a sling.** Often patients nod and say they understand when you explain how to use aids, but at home it seems often they forgot, so with this app

that they can consult anytime they want the things learned can be rehearsed.



We also had an activity with an Olympic medalist, a speed skater, who had an accident and no one informed him what to do, so he went on with his race, until he heard that he damaged his cruciate ligaments. And then it seemed he had to rehabilitate during one entire year! **He taught our children not only to think on the short term, but also on the long term.** And that is often very difficult for children, and for some parents too.

And we are developing a system with parents of very young children (2-4 years of age), we go over and **show what the normal joints look like and what do they look like in an acute situation.** They have to know. And also, they need cold packs, slings and crutches, and **learn how to use them, already before the first bleed(s).**

**Know what you  
are capable of!**

