



Playing sport when you have
Haemophilia

BAXTER & YOU

Shaping the future of haemophilia together

Sport is good for everyone including you!

It's good for everyone to play games and sports.

It keeps them strong and healthy. When you have haemophilia, strong muscles are particularly important because they help to protect your joints from bleeds.

While you're at primary school you will probably want to join in most of the games your friends play. Maybe you'll have the chance to go on an activity holiday and try new sports so that when you are older you can choose a sport that you enjoy.

This booklet gives some general advice about sports that children often play. Some are particularly good for boys with haemophilia; others it's best not to play and some may mean that you need to change which day you take your prophylaxis so you don't have problems.

Do girls get haemophilia?

It is possible for a girl to have full haemophilia, but this can happen only if she has a carrier Mum and a Dad with haemophilia. As you might expect, this is quite rare, but sometimes girls who are carriers can bleed just like they have mild or moderate haemophilia. Other bleeding conditions like von Willebrands Disease affect boys and girls.

Can I play football?

Most children with haemophilia can play social, non-competition football. It depends on how severe your haemophilia is and whether you have a target joint. The good news is that, even if you can't play football, there are lots of sports you can play.

Jamie loves football. He supports his local team but he likes to play football too. The doctor said it was ok to play at school and on the park but it would be better not to join a team because proper matches can be very rough.



Don't forget to talk to Mum or Dad and the doctor, nurse or physiotherapist at the haemophilia centre about what's best for you.



What sports can I try?

You can try most sports and games at school, but if any particular one makes you have bleeds then you should get advice from your centre. You may be able to adjust the time and day when you have your prophylaxis so it is having best effect when it is needed most or it may just be that it is better to give that activity up.

Do you look forward to sports days and PE?

Why not take your dog for walks or practice running with your friends ready for the races at school?

Swimming is lots of fun and really good for you too as it strengthens your muscles without hurting your joints. Walking sounds rather boring but it can be fun to go for walks with a dog or on rambles with your local scout groups.

Most children like to ride their bikes but it's really important to wear a helmet to protect your head. This is true for anyone riding a bike, not just for haemophilia.

PE at school and dancing can be fun and good for you. Running and jumping like the athletes at the Olympic Games may be a good idea too. You might be lucky enough to get the chance to try sailing, golf or archery. These are all good sports for older children with haemophilia.

Ben's favourite sport is golf. He started when he was younger at the driving range. He also likes to play basketball with his friends at the park.

Why not try an activity holiday? New sports like sailing, canoeing and windsurfing can be great fun.

But some sports really aren't a good idea

All very rough games or sports where there is fighting involved are best avoided. Rugby can be very rough and things like judo, karate, wrestling or boxing carry a high risk of injury. Sometimes the sport is just too risky, but the fitness training can be very good such as in non-contact martial arts.

Do you enjoy swimming? Swimming is probably the best exercise for someone with haemophilia as it strengthens your muscles without hurting your joints. Why not try racing in the swimming pool with friends or playing with the wave machine.

Other sports might be OK... or they might not

Games with bat and ball can be fun but they can be dangerous too so you must wear the right protective clothing for any sport. If you play cricket it is sensible to wear safety gear when you're batting even if you don't have a bleeding problem and it's probably safer to field near the boundary rather than close to the batsman.

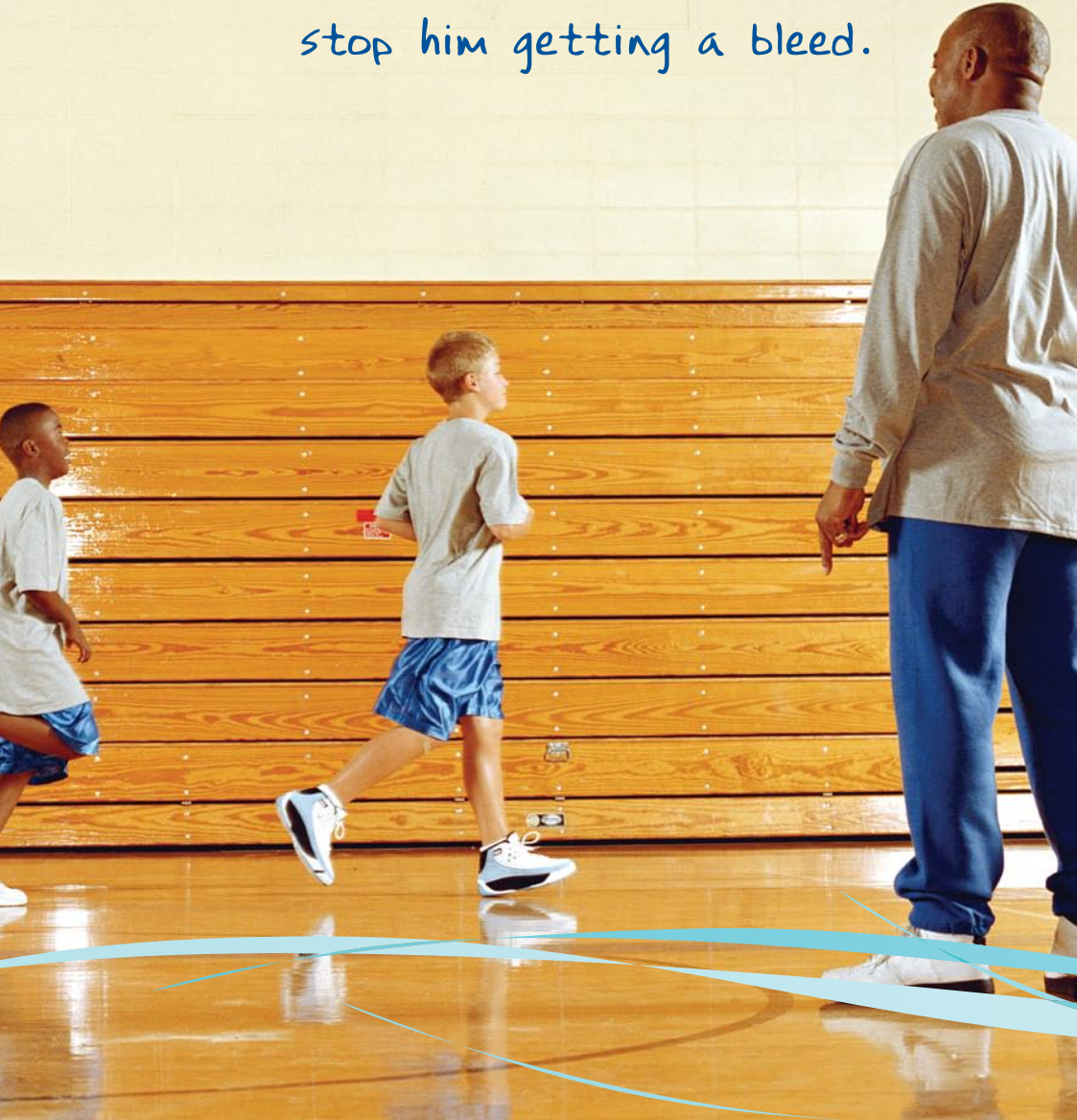
Certain other sports such as horse riding, climbing or abseiling should be tried only when you are with an expert teacher or coach and a haemophilia doctor, nurse or physiotherapist (for example at a Haemophilia Society Activity Holiday). That way you can learn the safest way to do things and there is someone on hand who can help if you hurt yourself.

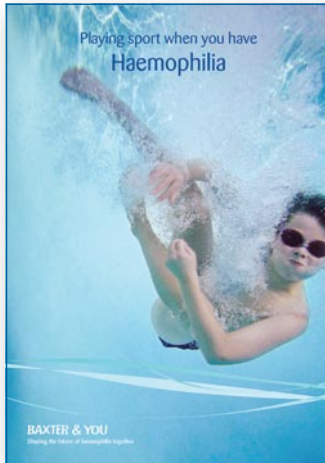
If there are games you want to try but are advised not to, there is often another sport you can try. (For example squash can be quite hard on your knees and ankles but tennis or badminton are better; football is less rough than Rugby; cross country skiing is less risky than downhill).

Remember: whilst there are certain types of sport you should avoid, there are many, many others you can enjoy. So get out there, get active and above all have fun!

SCORE

Before PE or football at school,
Jamie has his injection to
stop him getting a bleed.





Thanks to the UK Haemophilia Nursing Community
for their help with this publication.

Haemophilia Society Helpline – 0800 018 6068

www.haemophiliacare.co.uk

BAXTER & YOU

Shaping the future of haemophilia together

ADV08/2271B

October 2008