

Play To Help Your Child When Activities Are Limited (The Immobilized Child)

Your child's movement and activities need to be limited for a time. These ideas help keep your child growing and developing during this time. Be sure you talk to your child's doctor about activities to avoid.

Why is play important during this time?

Play can:

- Relieve stress from not being able to be active.
- Help your child continue to grow and develop, physically, mentally and emotionally.
- Help your child to share their feelings.
- Give your child choices to help them feel in control.
- Help your child escape from pain and sadness.
- Help to lessen physical side effects due to decreased activity.

How can I help my child share and deal with feelings?

- **Share medical experiences.** Help your child play doctor or nurse. Have your child make drawings, paintings or a scrapbook about the hospital stay.
- **Share feelings.** Being away from school and friends is hard. Help your child write letters or make a video for the class. Let your child play with their hands using clay or play dough.
- **Communicate.** Make time each day for phone calls to school and friends. Ask the teacher if 1 to 2 students could call your child at lunch each day or see if it's possible to utilize video chat method like Skype. Ask friends and family to write to your child. Children also love to get mail!
- **Explore their body image.** Give crayons, watercolor paint or chalk and art paper so your child can draw a self-portrait. Help your child write a story about the hospital stay.
- **Encourage independence.** Put your child where they can reach toys on their own.



What activities will help my child grow?

Physical Growth	Social Growth (Cooperative & competitive play)	Intellectual Growth (Imaginative Play)
• Toss a ball	• Board games	• Read books
• Use a punching bag	• Legos® or Duplos®	• Journal or Story writing
• Play "Simon Says"	• Computer games	• Listen to stories or music
• Play with building blocks, model planes or cars	• Phone calls to family and friends	• Jigsaw puzzles • Globes and maps

Physical Growth	Social Growth (Cooperative & competitive play)	Intellectual Growth (Imaginative Play)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stitching projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word puzzles
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paint
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dolls and plastic animals

Tips for playtime

- Before you start, tell your child the rules for playtime.
- If your child is in a cast, avoid games with small pieces that might get into it.
- Play that lets your child express feelings, such as arts and crafts or play dough is great!
- If allowed, active, physical movement is helpful. Toss a ball with your child or let your child play with a punching bag.
- Put toys away when play time is over. Let your child play with different toys.
- Have a sturdy work surface, such as lap trays, bed tables or a bed easel for homework or drawing.
- Use a bed tray for your child to write on or a cookie sheet for magnet play. Give your child a soft bottom-writing surface for homework or drawing.
- Keep supplies close by. Make a container with a cover to keep:
 - Pencils
 - Crayons
 - Paper
 - Colored pencils
 - Erasers
 - Glue stick
 - Markers
 - Blunt scissors
- Have brothers or sisters join in play.



Tips for the rest of the day

- Have interesting things around to look at. Have toys with textures, posters, a fish bowl or mirrors.
- Make up activities each day to expand your child's world. Read about far away places or watch movies about different cultures.
- Move your child to a different room every day. This will help to expand your child's view.
- Plan a schedule and stick to it. Include time for play, school, exercise, family, meals and rest.
- Have your child help with household chores. Your child can sort socks or cut out and sort coupons. This will help your child feel like an important part of the family.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up