

Joint Pain Relief versus Joint Stiffness

The two main joint problems are:

- joint pain
- joint stiffness

These two symptoms can occur in isolation or they can occur simultaneously, which means you can have joint stiffness and pain.

How Much Joint Movement is Normal?

For full and pain-free movement your joints need to move freely in all directions that they were designed. If they become locked or restricted in any particular direction, you may experience pain and/or stiffness. Luckily, with the assistance of a skilled physiotherapist who understand your joints, you can regain quickly and easily regain full joint range and pain-free movement. To achieve this, your physiotherapist will assess which of your joints are:

- painful (but normal motion)
- stiff
- painful and stiff
- hypermobile
- painful and hypermobile

Joint mobilisation treatment varies depending on the joint stiffness / hypermobility and the pain associated with moving your joint. Your skilled physiotherapist is the ideal health professional trained to assess and treat your joint dysfunction effectively.

What are Joint Mobilisation Techniques?

Joint mobilisation techniques focus on attaining a normal range of pain-free joint motion. Nearly every restriction in movement can be regained by a specific joint technique performed by an experienced musculoskeletal physiotherapist. And the good news is ... joint mobilisation techniques have certainly improved over the years with very gentle and pain-free options available. The old crunch and munch, click and pop techniques are thankfully a thing of the past! Plus, it is also very important not to overstretch a joint to create hypermobility or instability. Hypermobile joints require different treatment techniques to a stiff joint.

Why do Joints Stiffen or Lock Up?

Joint stiffness or a locked joint can be associated with any joint, muscle, tendon and ligament injury. Plus, joints can lock and become stuck in an open or closed position. Much like a door that doesn't quite fully swing open or close, it runs into something and it becomes stiff and/or painful.

Normally, a simple alignment or control issue has caused the joint to move in an awkward and unnatural direction. As a result, the joint treatment method used to correct your locked joints will vary depending upon your physiotherapist's diagnosis.

Common Examples of Joint Mobilisation & Pain Relief Techniques may include:

- Gentle Joint Mobilisations (eg Maitland, Mulligan, Kaltenborn techniques)
- Mobility Exercises (eg McKenzie exercises)
- Minimal Energy Techniques (Osteopathic-based active joint repositioning techniques)
- Joint Manipulation
- Traction / Distraction Techniques