Tim Has Arthritis

An information booklet by the
Arthritis Research Campaign
written for 4–8 year-olds

arc
0870 850 5000
www.arc.org.uk
Committed to curing arthritis

Tim Has Arthritis

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(Tim's story)

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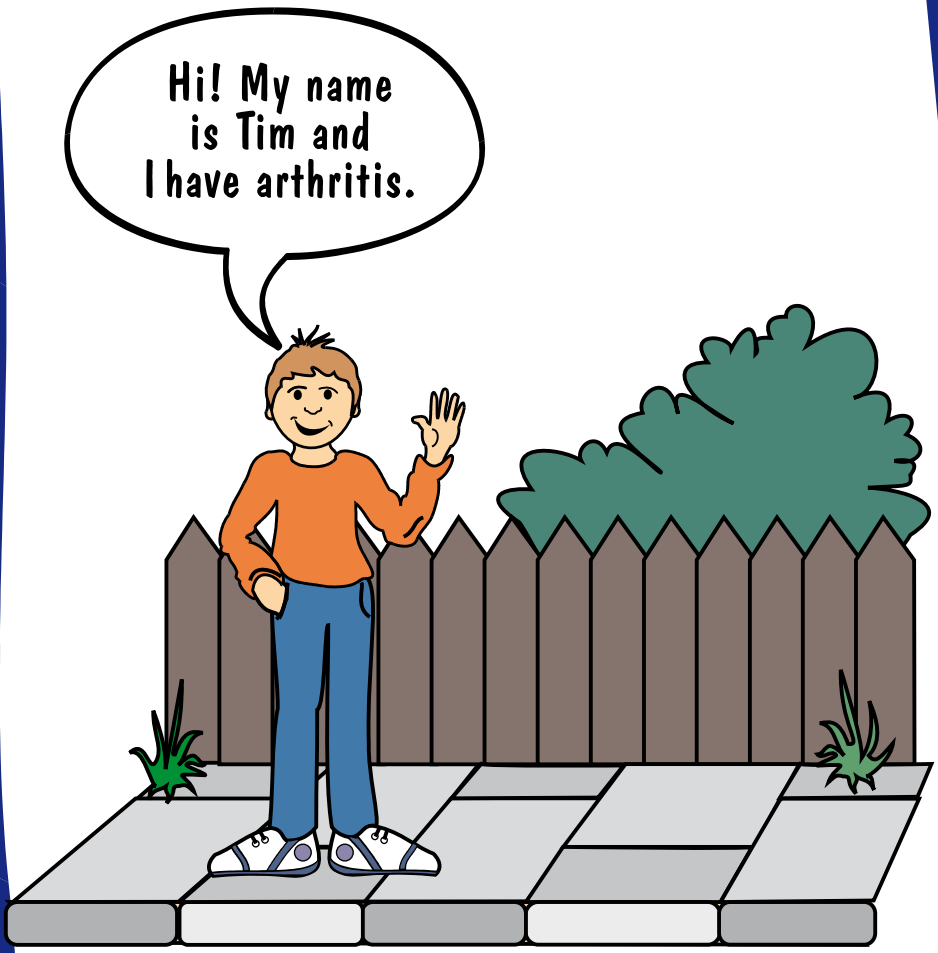
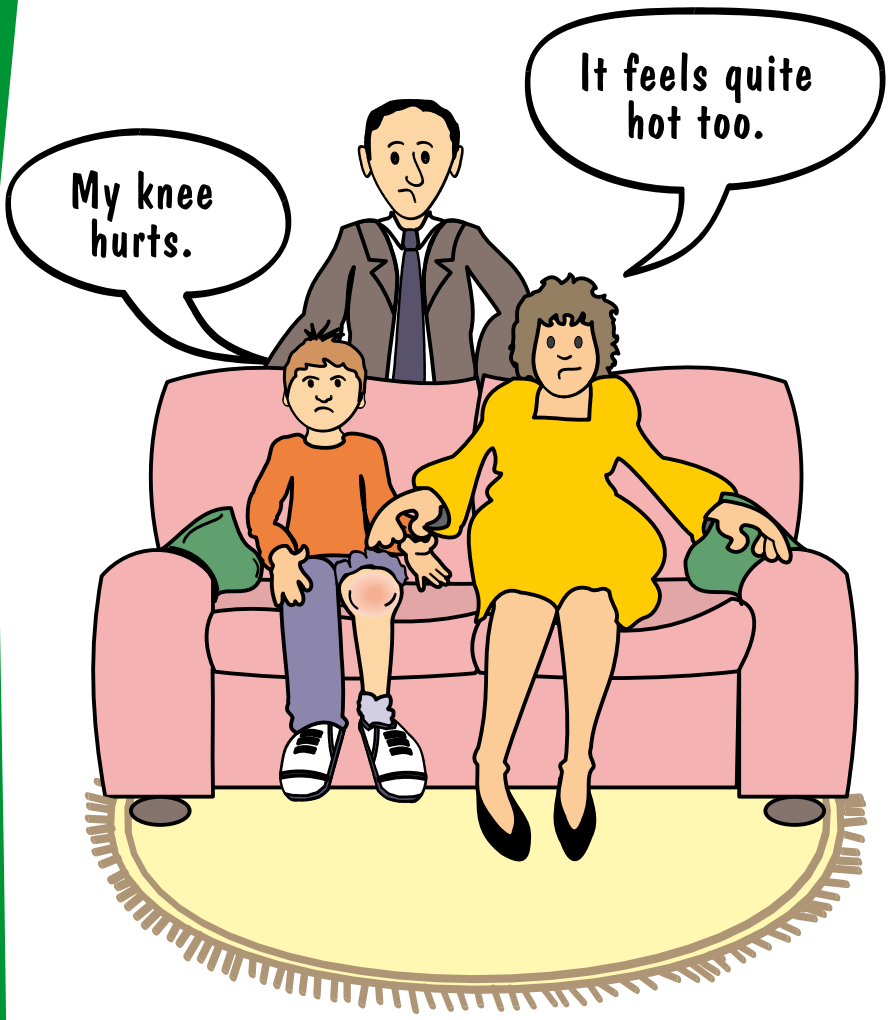
ISBN 978 1 901815 07 8

Published by the Arthritis Research Campaign (arc)
Copeman House, St Mary's Court
St Mary's Gate, Chesterfield
Derbyshire S41 7TD

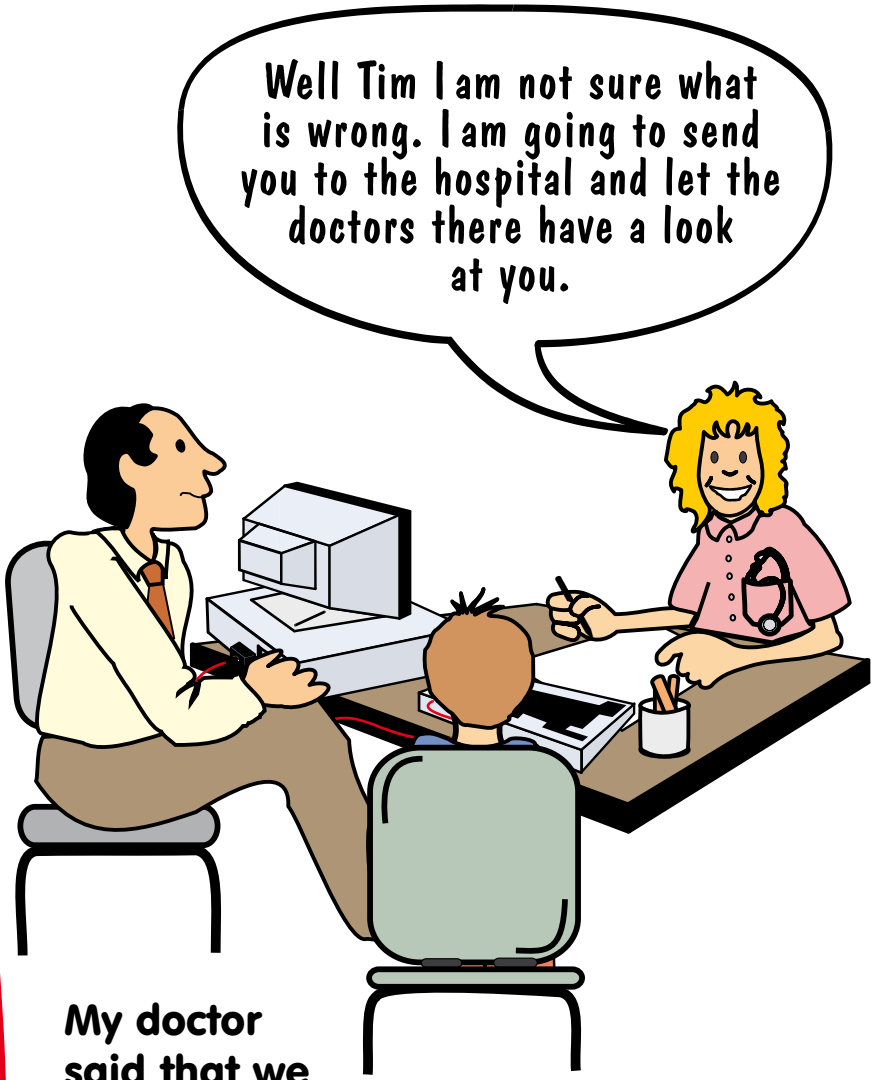
Registered Charity No. 207711



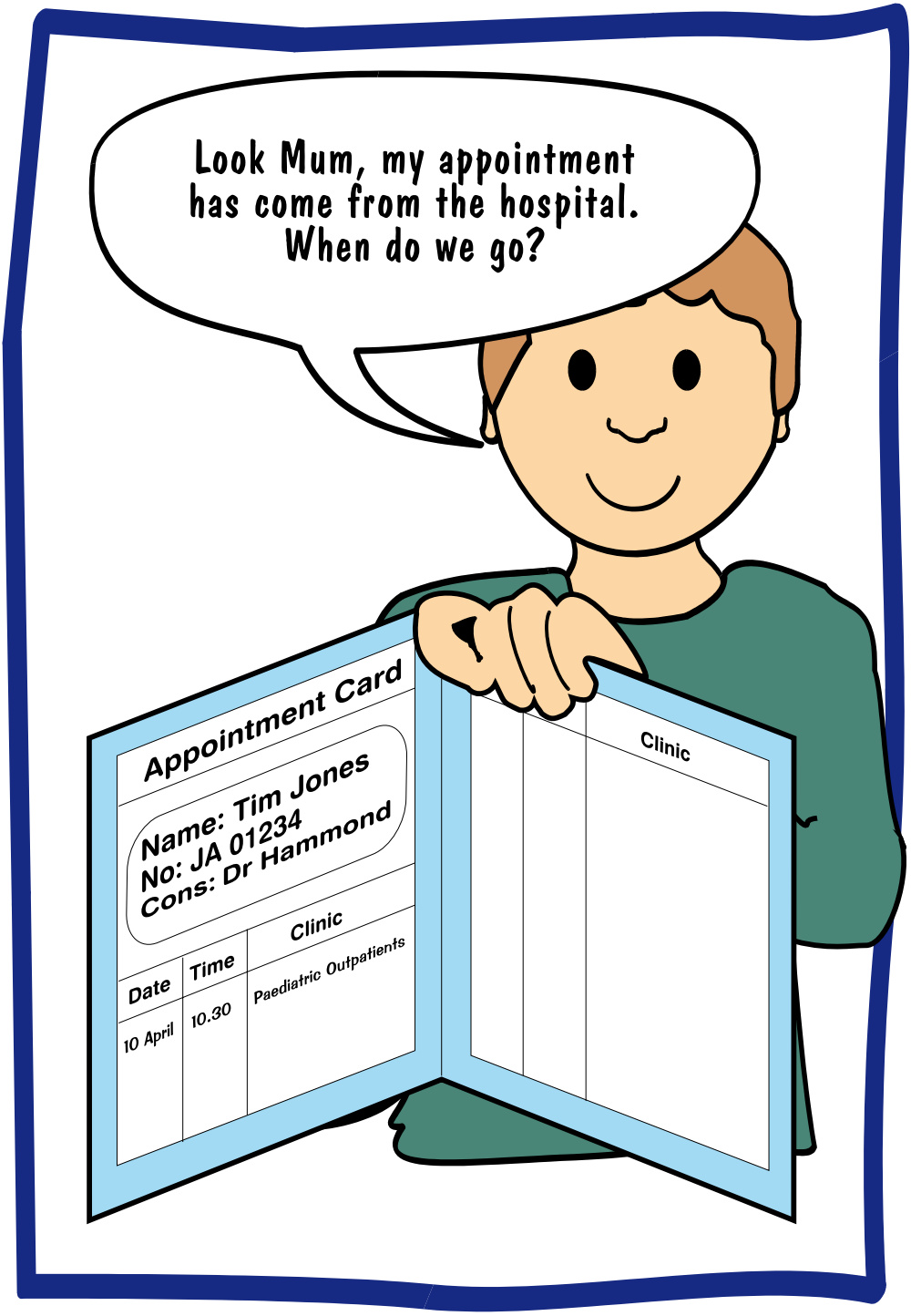
**Mine started when I was 8.
I want to tell you about it because
I hear you have it too.**



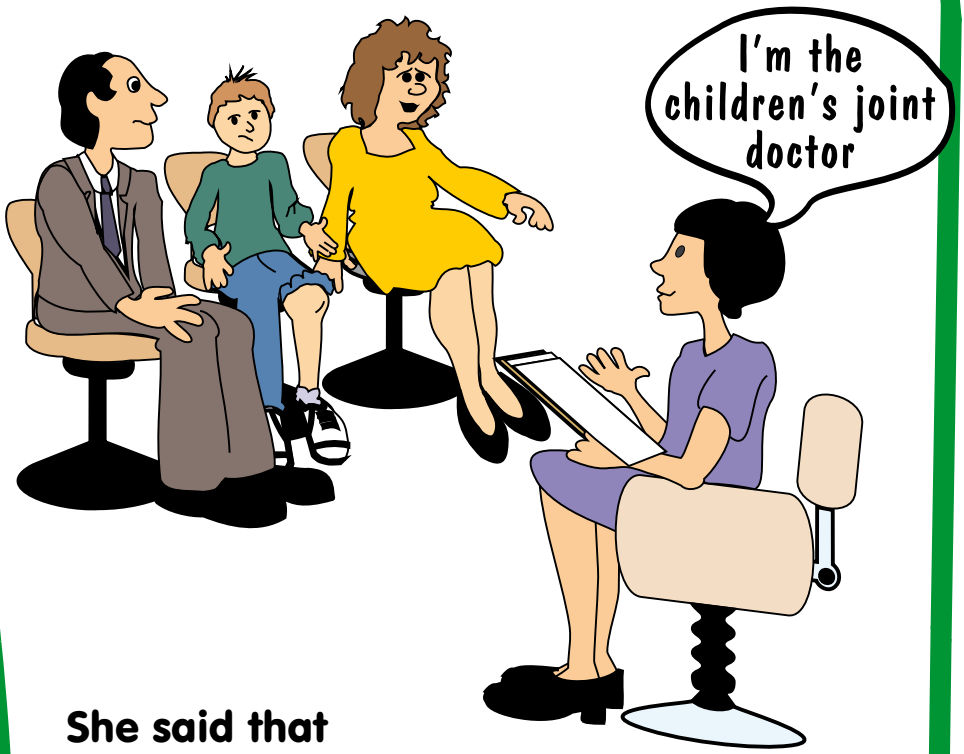
My knee started to hurt when I ran and when I sat down. Then it suddenly became hot and swollen. Dad took me straight to our doctor.



My doctor said that we would get an appointment soon. I felt funny in my tummy and a bit excited too as I hadn't been to hospital before.


Look Mum, my appointment has come from the hospital. When do we go?
Appointment Card
Name: Tim Jones
No: JA 01234
Cons: Dr Hammond
Date
Time
Clinic
10 April
10.30
Paediatric Outpatients
Clinic

The doctor was very nice and said she wanted to find out what was wrong with me.

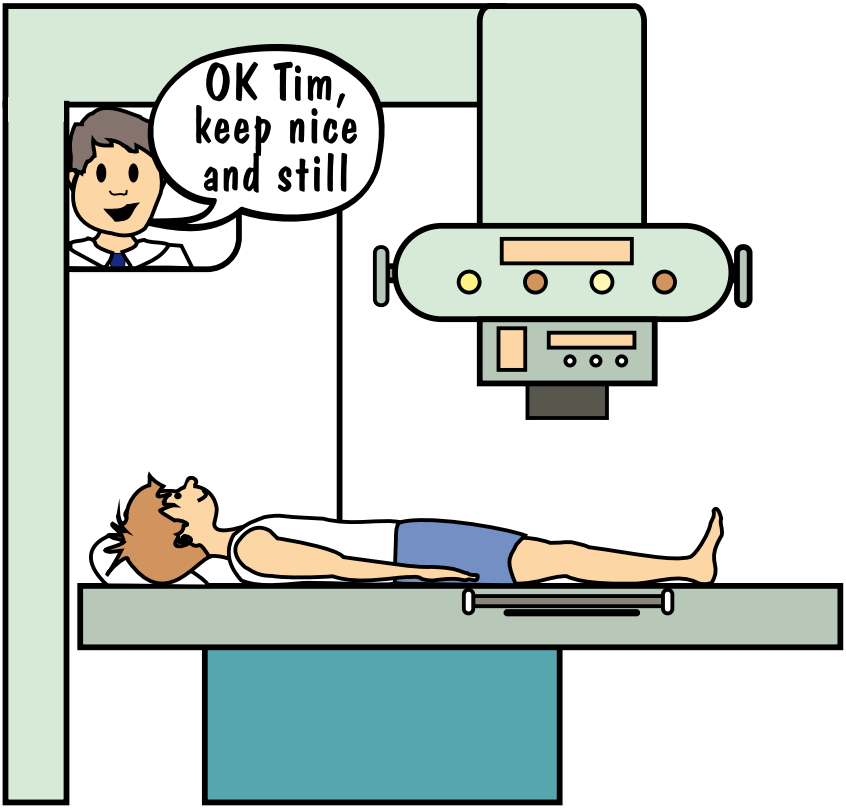


She said that doctors have to be like detectives to try to solve the mystery of my knee. They look for clues all around my body and have to do lots of tests.

The doctor checked all the parts of my body that move, starting at my head and going down to my toes.

She looked especially at my knee and how it couldn't move as well as my other one. She could see that my bad knee was swollen and also felt quite hot.

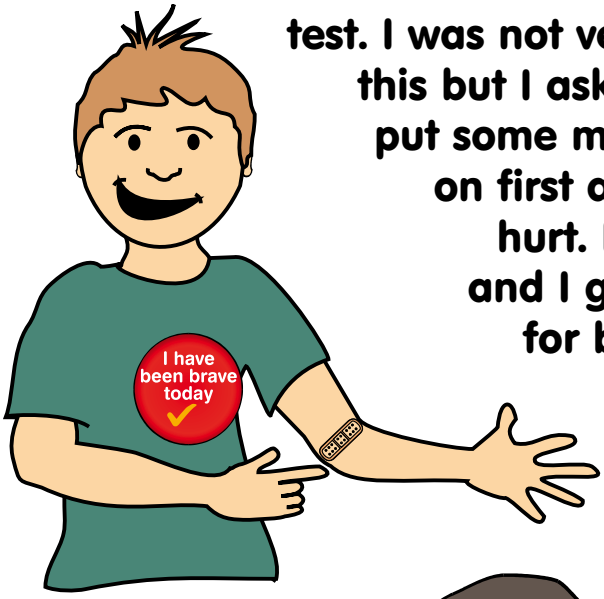
They did a lot of looking at my knee, on the outside and on the inside! They looked at the inside by taking an x-ray photograph of my knee.



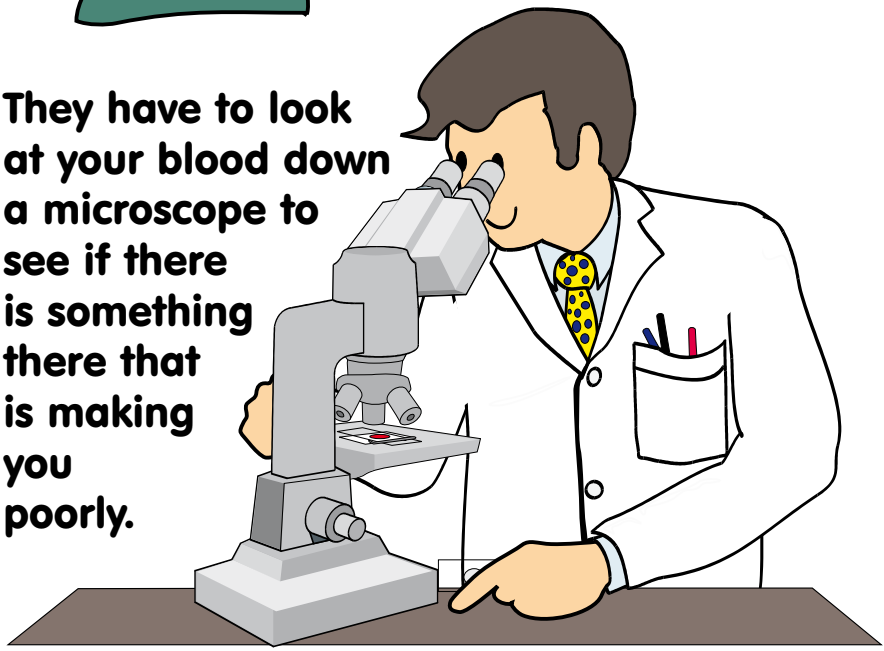
You have to lie on a long bed with a big camera over the top. It can take pictures of the inside of your body. Sometimes they take a different kind of picture called an 'MRI scan'.

The doctor showed me the x-ray picture of my knee.

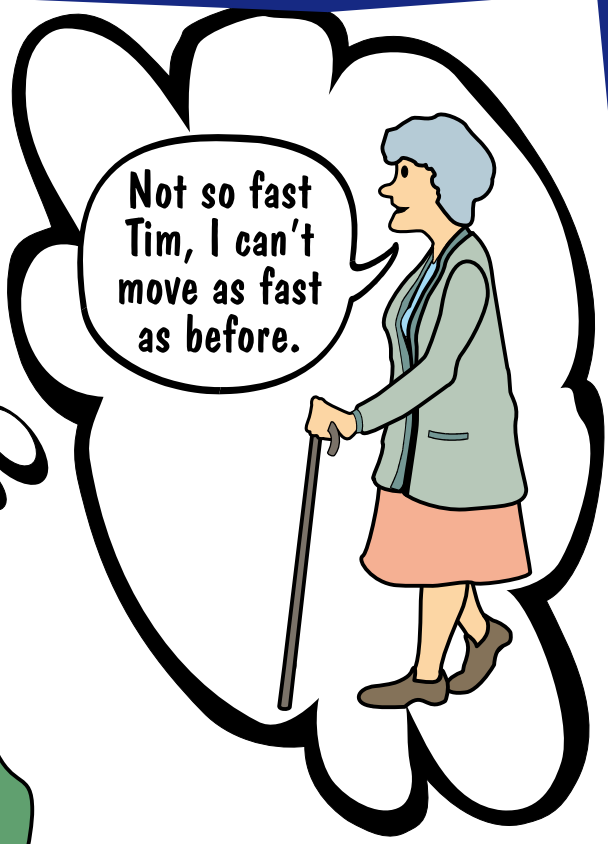
One of the tests to find clues was a blood test. I was not very keen on this but I asked them to put some magic cream on first and it didn't hurt. I was brave and I got a sticker for being good.

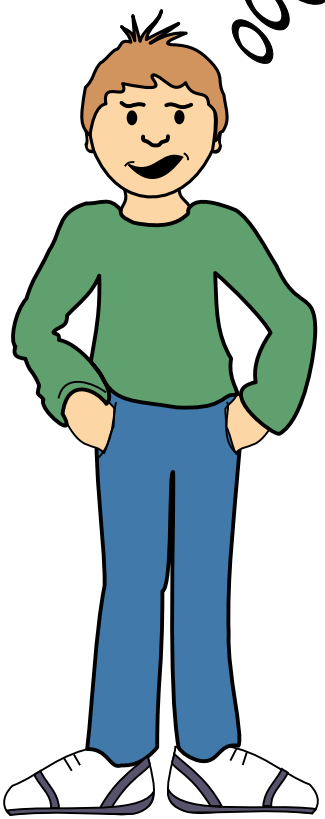


They have to look at your blood down a microscope to see if there is something there that is making you poorly.



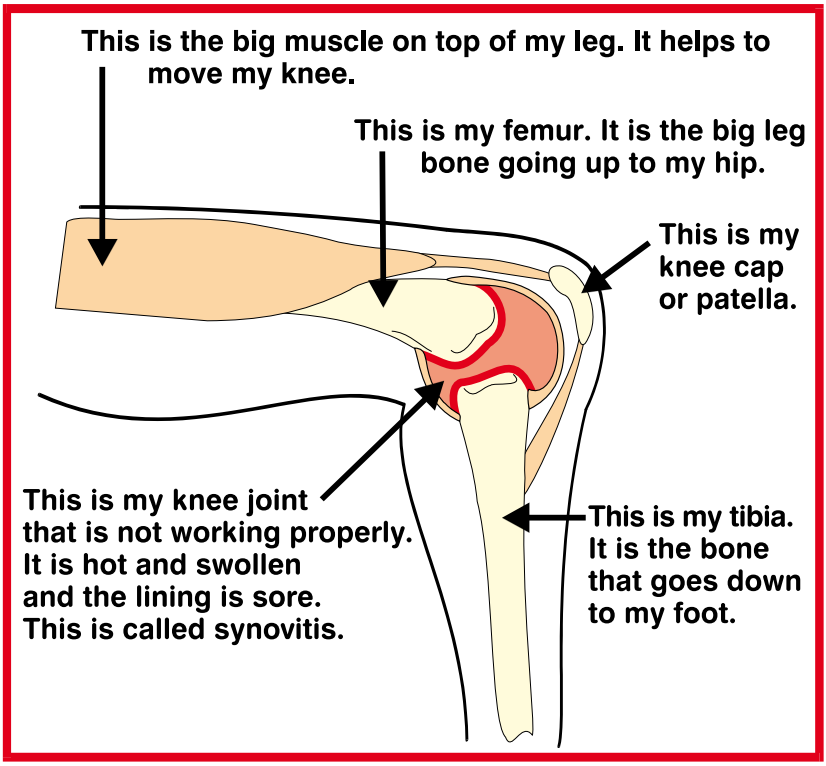
After the doctors had looked at all the clues they told me that I had arthritis!





I was very surprised because I thought only older people like my Grandma had arthritis. The doctors told me that mine was a different sort of arthritis.

The doctor showed me a picture of my knee and the part of it that was not working properly.



It might not be your knee that has arthritis but the same thing can happen in the joints of your hand, ankle or any other joint in your body.

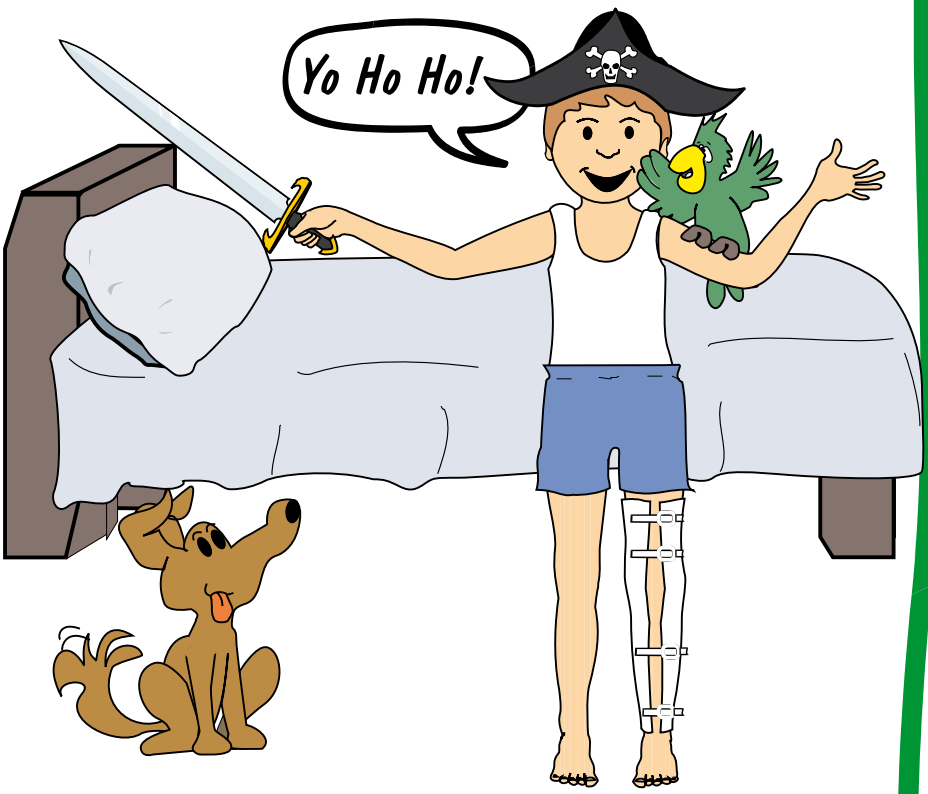
The doctor gave me some medicine to help take away the pain. I have to take it every day in the morning and at night.

After that we met all the other people who care for you if you have arthritis.

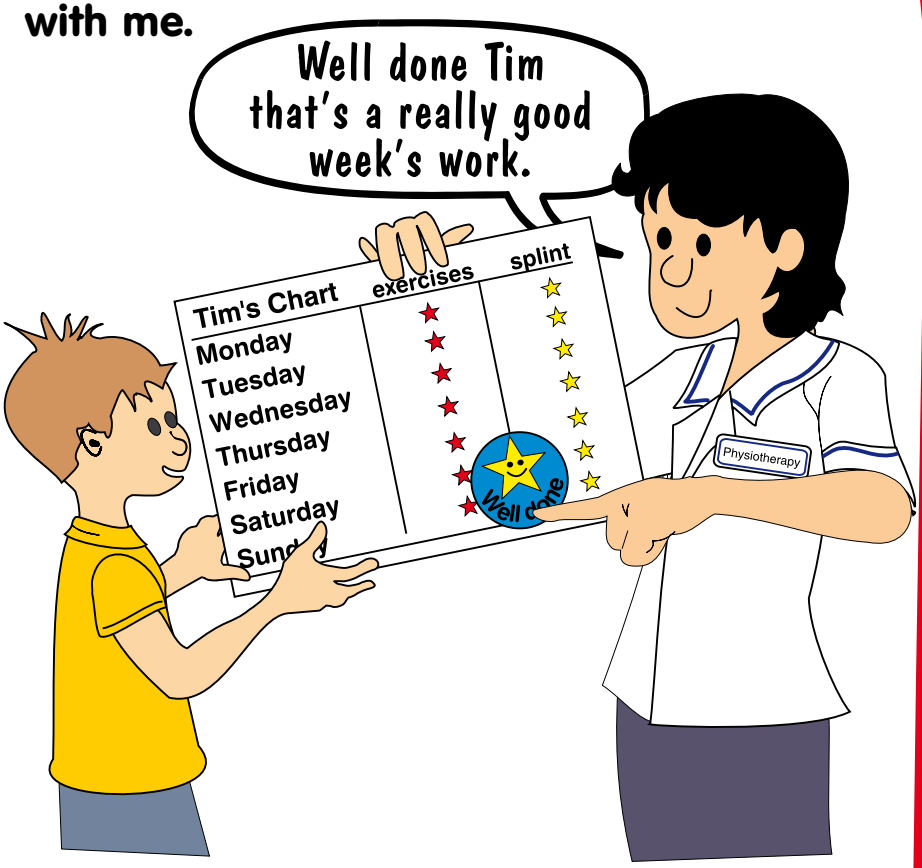
The first person I met was the specialist nurse. He works all the time with children who have arthritis. He was very friendly and said I could talk to him about anything which bothers me!

Then I met the occupational therapist. Because my leg hurt a lot I hadn't used it properly and it was a bit bent. The occupational therapist made a splint for my leg.

I must wear my splint every night when I go to bed. It will help my leg to go straight again. It felt a bit funny at first and I felt like a pirate with a wooden leg!

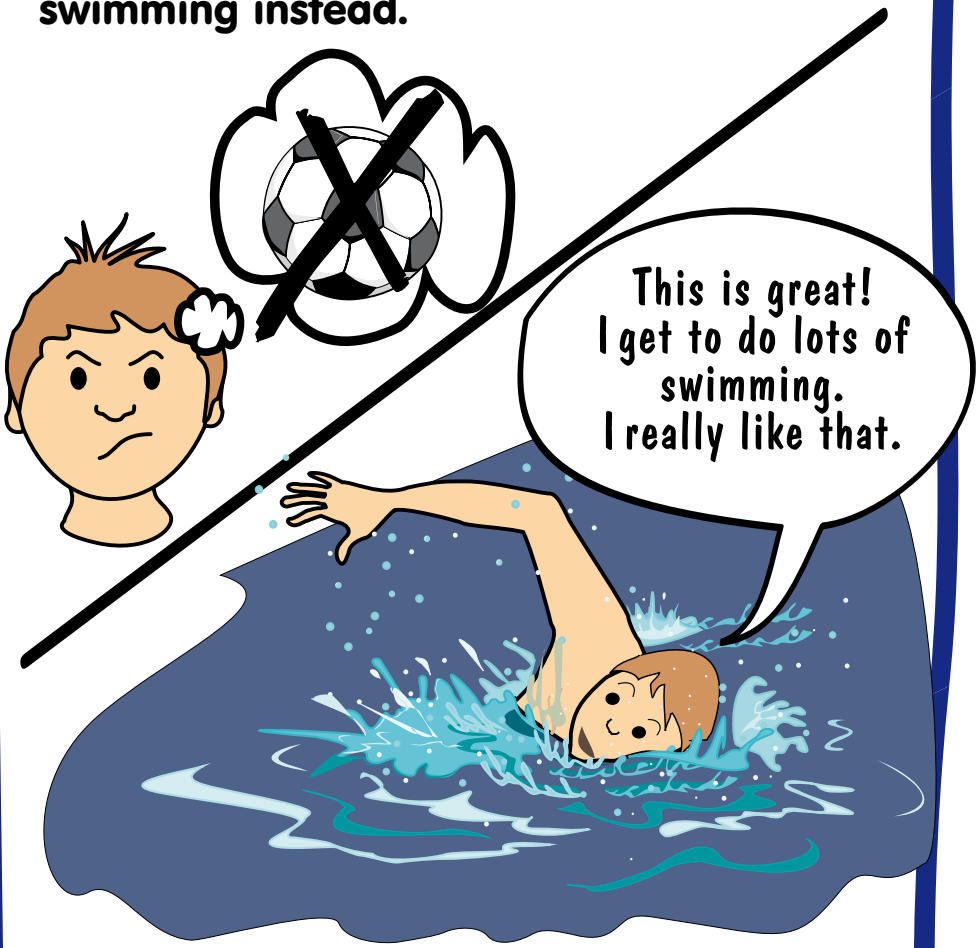


The physiotherapist gave me special exercises to do every day to make my leg strong again. These are sometimes uncomfortable but Mum and Dad do them with me.



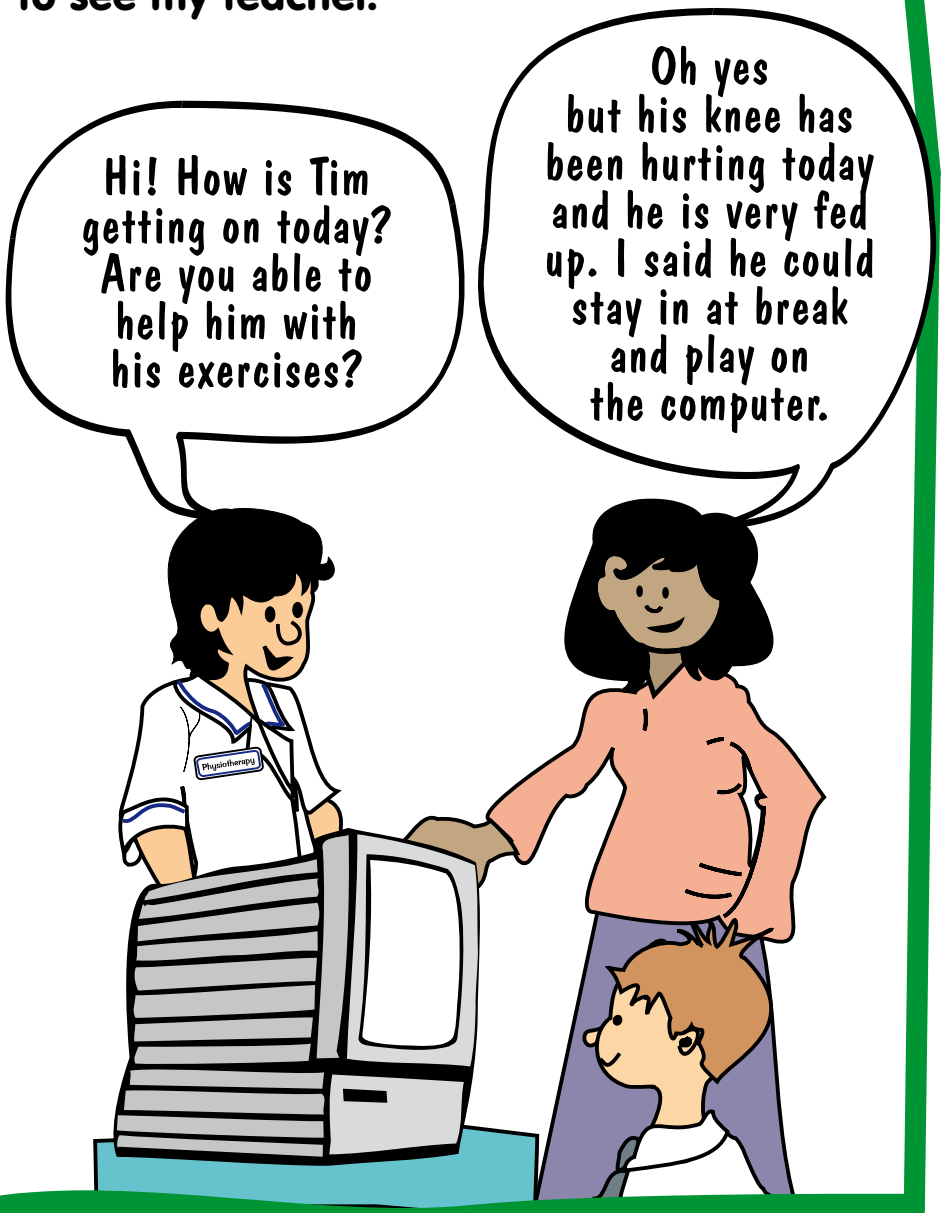
I have a star chart to fill in every day and if I have done my exercises all week and worn my splint I get stickers from my therapists.

I was very fed up when the doctor said I couldn't do games at school, like football and gym, until my leg was better.
The physiotherapist said I should go swimming instead.

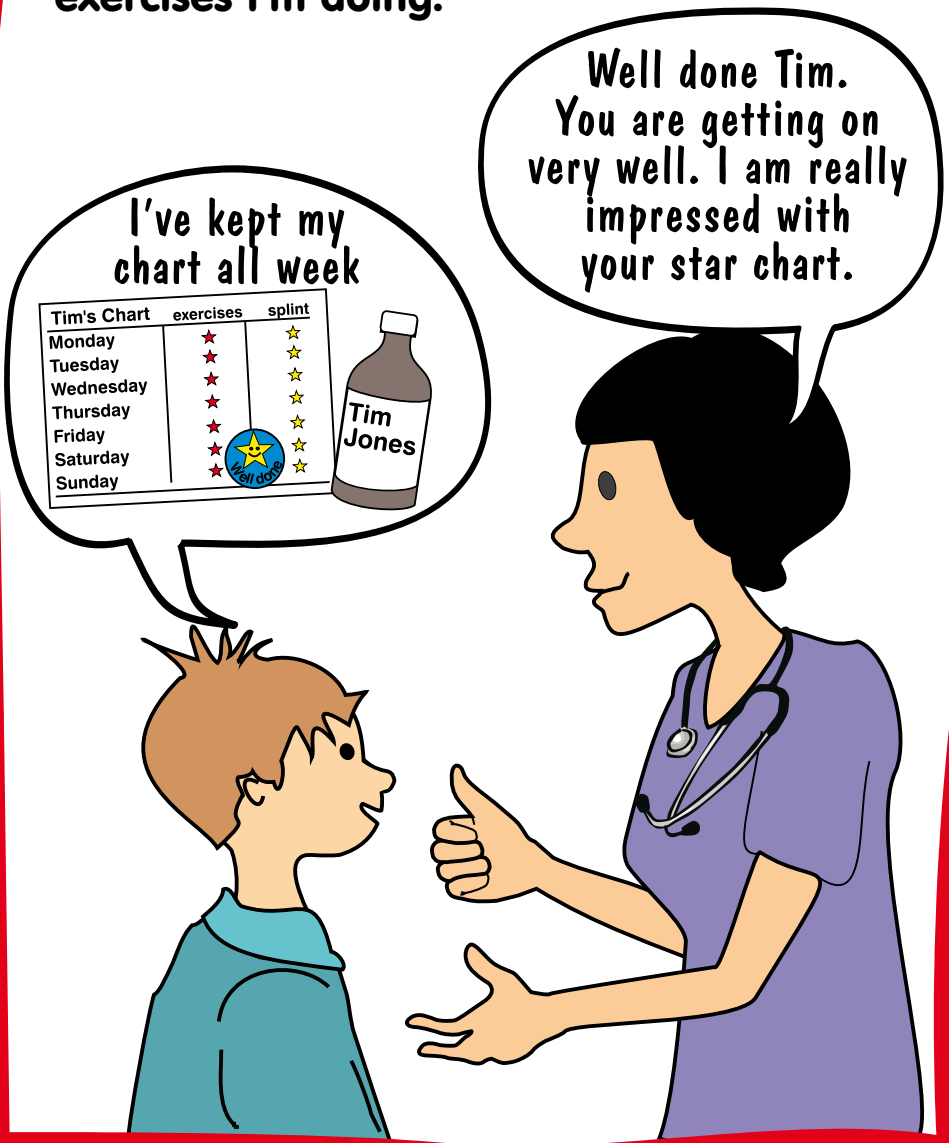


They said I might be able to play football again when my knee gets a bit better.

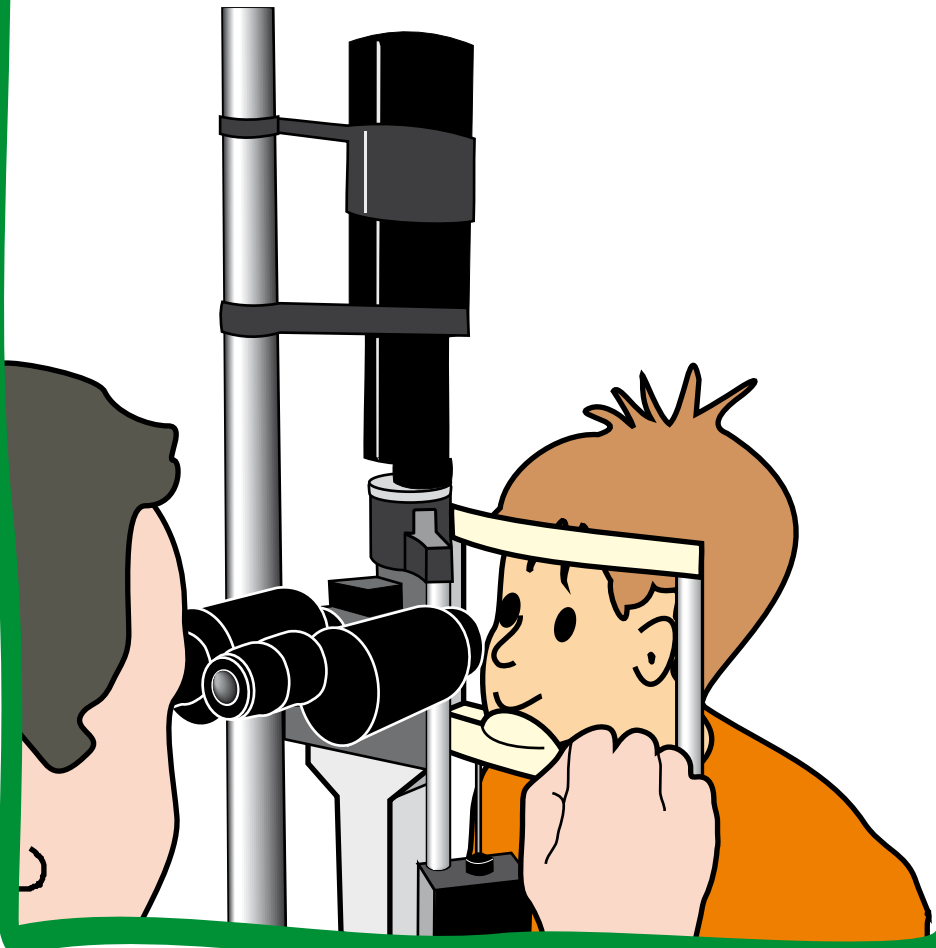
Sometimes the physiotherapist or the occupational therapist comes to school to see my teacher.



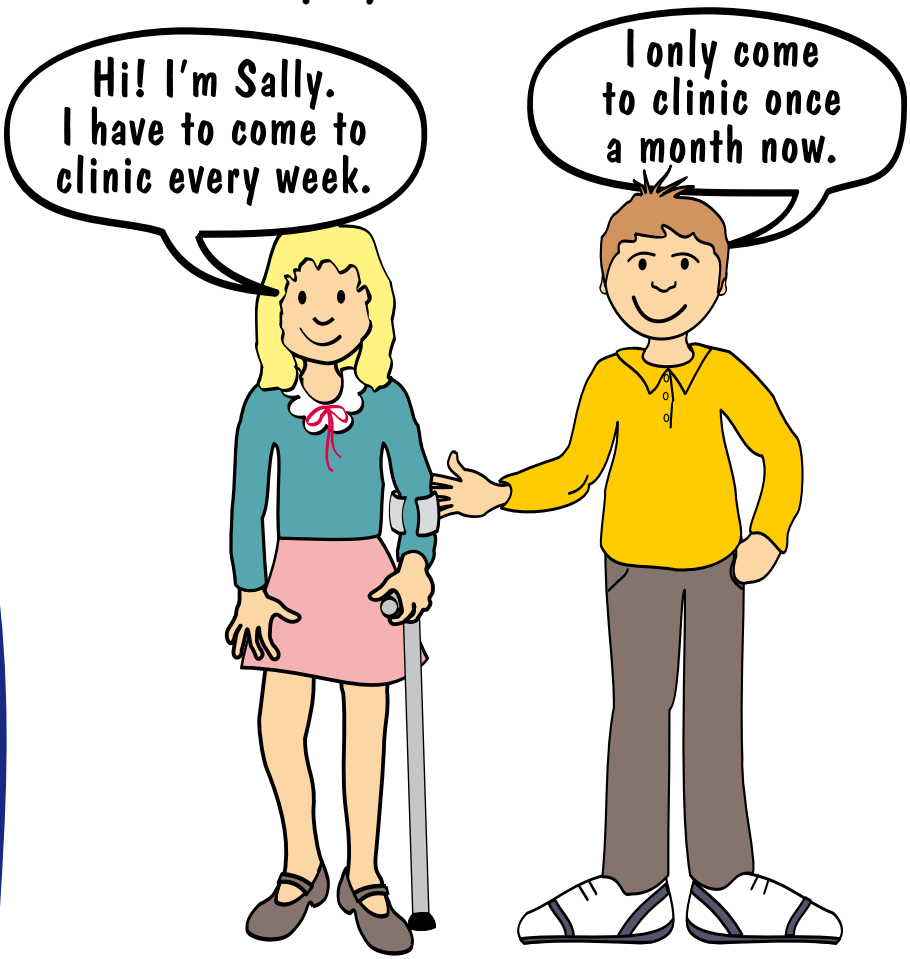
When I come for check-ups at the hospital the doctor asks if I can remember when I take my medicine. She also asks what exercises I'm doing.



On one visit the doctor sent me for a special eye test to see if the arthritis is affecting my eyes. The thing they use is called a slit-lamp because the light shines into your eyes through a tiny slot. It didn't hurt at all and the doctor said my eyes were fine.



When I come to the clinic I see lots of other children with arthritis. Some are like me with only one joint that hurts. That's called monoarthritis. Some are like Sally who has lots of joints that hurt. That's called polyarthritis.



Keep doing your exercises like Sally and me. We hope you will feel better soon. Bye!

Useful booklets

from the Arthritis Research Campaign *(see address over)*

When Your Child Has Arthritis (written for parents)
When a Young Person Has Arthritis (written for teachers)
Growing Pains (written for 5–10 year-olds)
Arthritis – a Guide for Teenagers (for 13–20 year-olds)
Knee Pain in Young Adults (written for young adults)
Joint Hypermobility (written for adults)

from Arthritis Care *(see address over)*

A Day with Sam (a booklet to be read to children with arthritis)
Chat 2 Parents – Arthritis in Teenagers (written for parents)

from other organisations

Kids with Arthritis – a Guide for Families
This handbook is available free of charge in the UK. Donations towards postage and packing are appreciated. Contact: CHOICES as listed overleaf.

Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis – Children with JIA in School
Contact: Rheumatology Department, Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust, Great Ormond Street, London WC1N 3JH. Phone 020 7405 9200, ext 5826

Useful Organisations

Arthritis Research Campaign (arc)
PO Box 177, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 7TD
Phone: 0870 850 5000
www.arc.org.uk

arc funds research into all types of arthritis and produces a wide range of free booklets in addition to 'Tim Has Arthritis'. Please contact the address above for details.

Arthritis Care
18 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2HD
Phone: 020 7380 6500
Helpline ('The Source') for young people with arthritis:
0808 808 2000
www.arthritiscare.org.uk

Runs support groups and a helpline service for younger people.

Children's Chronic Arthritis Association (CCAA)
Ground Floor, Amber Gate, City Walls Road, Worcester WR1 2AH
Phone: 01905 745595
www.ccaa.org.uk

Offers support for families of children with arthritis and arranges educational and recreational projects.

CHOICES (for Families of Children with Arthritis)
PO Box 58, Hove, East Sussex BN3 5WN
Phone (to record a request for publications): 01273 430219
www.kidswitharthritis.org

Provides advice, information and support to families of children with arthritis. The website contains a range of helpful factsheets.

Contact a Family
209–211 City Road, London EC1V 1JN
Phone: 020 7608 8700
Helpline: 0808 808 3555

Provides support, advice and information for families of children with arthritis.

The Family Fund
Unit 4 Alpha Court, Monks Cross Drive, Huntington, York YO32 9WN
Phone: 0845 130 4542
www.familyfund.org.uk

arc 0870 850 5000 www.arc.org.uk
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Published by the Arthritis Research Campaign May 2007 Registered Charity No. 207711 6045/TIM/07-1

Printed on 75% recycled paper