

## GRADED EXERCISE THERAPY (GET)

### What is it?

Graded Exercise Therapy is about finding a level of physical activity (which may include exercise) that is right for you and helping you increase it very slowly so you can do the things you want to do. We will start with finding out how much physical activity you should do safely each day. It might be a very tiny amount like a few steps or it might be quite a bit. We will try and help you do the same amount each day and then slowly increase it.

### How might it help?

GET probably works in several ways. For some people, GET stops children and young people doing too much exercise on good days. For other children it helps them to get fitter. Making sure we start at the right level and increasing slowly will help you do this safely.

The use of regular exercise or physical activity, starting at a low level and increasing in duration, then intensity should help you get fitter which should help you sleep better, concentrate more and manage more activities. We think this may help you get better from CFS/ME. Activities can, for example, include gentle walks, a sport or spending time in the garden or park with friends.

### Assessment

Before we plan your programme, we need to know how fit you are to make sure we don't give you too much physical activity. We will talk to you about how much you do on good days and bad days and find out what your goals are. For example, you might want to walk to the shops, or around the shops or play sport. We will check your muscle strength and balance to enable us to start at the right level. These tests will be finding out how often you can stand from sitting in 1 minute and how many steps you can do in 2 minutes. Sometimes children can only do a few of these and that is OK. If you want to do sport, we will probably check your balance before you start so you don't injure yourself.

### Programme

We will decide on your programme together. We will ask you to record what physical activity you do each day. We don't want you to do too much on good days so we may suggest you use a heart rate monitor to make sure you don't do too much at the start of the programme. When you are fitter, you can use this to make sure you do the right type of physical activity.

### Type of physical activity

It's important that you chose something you want to do. Most children chose a gentle walk but you could do other types of physical activity as well. At the start, we will ask you to do something that doesn't increase your heart rate. Then we will ask you to increase this slowly until you can manage this for 30 minutes a day. When you are a bit fitter, we will ask you to do exercise that increases your heart rate a little.

### Normal Responses to exercise

It is quite normal to notice your heart beating a little faster and your breathing a little faster. Sometimes you might have slight aching of the muscles. We will work with you to make sure that the physical activity level is safe so this symptoms should be slight and temporary.