

# What is Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA)?

- The most common form of arthritis in children and one of the most common chronic childhood illnesses
- Joint symptoms of JIA include:
  - Swelling
  - Stiffness
  - Redness
  - Warmth or pain
- Non-joint symptoms may include:
  - Fatigue
  - Poor sleep
  - Decreased hunger
  - Weight loss

## What is Systemic Arthritis?

- Systemic arthritis affects the entire body
- Least common form of JIA and may affect the child's internal organs as well as joints
- Symptoms of systemic onset JIA include:
  - High, spiking fevers (103°F or higher) that may occur daily for weeks or even months
  - Rash of pale, red spots that appear on the child's chest, thighs and sometimes other parts of the body joint inflammation, which usually begins at the same time as the systemic symptoms (fever and rash) but may begin weeks or months later
  - Other possible symptoms include: inflammation of the heart, or lungs or their outer lining; anemia (low iron in the blood); and enlarged lymph nodes, liver or spleen

## Five Ways to Get Kids to Adhere to Their Treatment Plans

1. **Routine:** Make it a habit; set aside the same time every day.
2. **Reward:** Age-appropriate and goal-appropriate prizes for sticking to their treatment plan.
3. **Reassure:** Taking their medication makes a big difference. It may not change how they feel today but it will make a difference in a few days, weeks or years.
4. **Relinquish:** Letting a responsible teen be in charge of his medications, while still reasonably monitoring him, helps him take responsibility for his health.
5. **Remind:** Everyone needs a little reminder every now and then.

## Coping With a Flare

- Make sure your child takes medicine on time to avoid flares caused by lack of medicine.
- Call your child's doctor if you suspect your child is having a flare.
- After the first 24 hours, heat may be soothing for sore joints. Ask the doctor (or nurse practitioner or physician assistant) to teach you massage for achy joints.
- Change your child's activities so they are easier to do when they are in pain. Keep your child active to keep up their muscle strength and flexibility.
- Be supportive.
- Ask your child's doctor about using splints at night.