



**I am going to the  
exercise doctor**



# A note to Caregivers:

This book was written for patients of different ages and language levels. Please use language your child is familiar with at home or when visiting a doctor.

Not all sections will apply to your child.

Read this first and choose what information you think will be helpful. You know your child best.

This book will detail the steps of a Physical Therapy appointment.

In this story we refer to the Physical Therapist as an “exercise doctor”. You can determine which language is best to use for your child.

You may consider bringing a distraction or sensory/comfort item with you. Accommodations will depend on the location and staffing.

Some children benefit from a reward after exercises. Please see the customizable visual on the last page of this story. This is one way to present the idea of a reward to your child (e.g., “First \_\_\_\_\_, then [insert prize here]”).

We also recommend filling out the Autism Friendly Questionnaire in preparation of your visit. If you have trouble filling out the form in MyChart, then you may download a paper copy from our website and bring it with you to the appointment. See QR code for details.

If you have more questions about strategies, please contact the Autism Friendly Health System Initiative at [autismfriendly@rchsd.org](mailto:autismfriendly@rchsd.org)

Sincerely,

**The RCHSD Autism Friendly Health System Initiative Team**



**I am going to the exercise doctor. My doctor will check how my body moves. They will teach me special exercises so I can be strong!**

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**First, I will check in at the front desk.**

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**I will wait in the waiting room. I can *[insert distraction item from home here]* while I wait. If it is too loud, I can wait in the hallway.**

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**When the doctor calls my name,  
I will walk to the gym with my  
[caregiver].**

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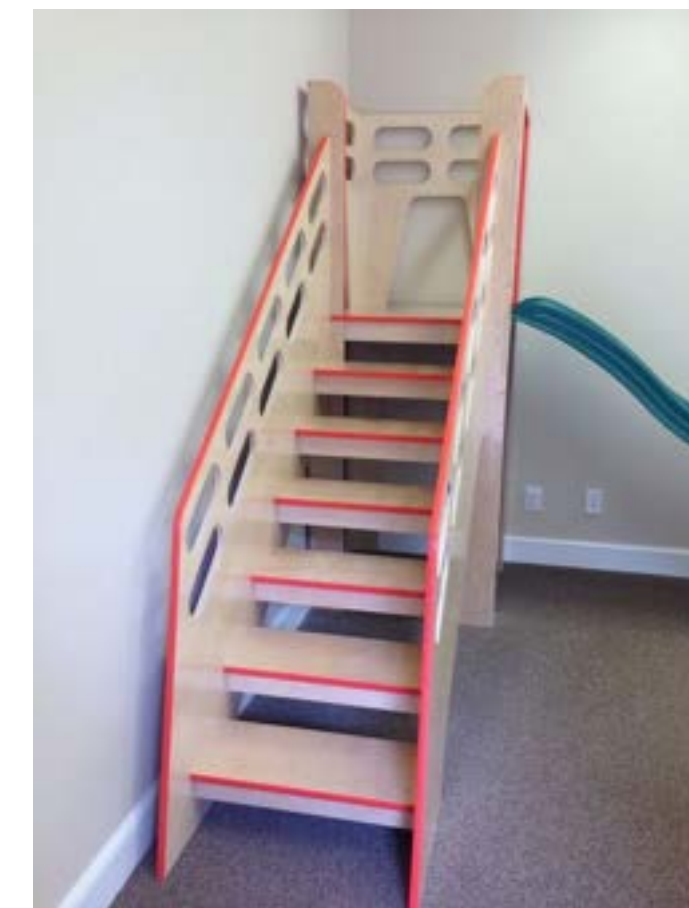
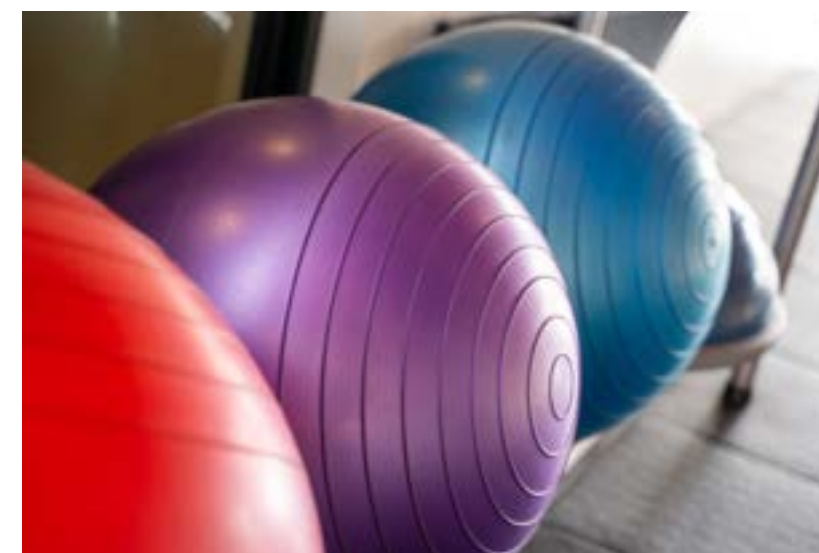
**I will use hand sanitizer to clean my hands. Next, I will sit down in a chair. The doctor will ask me and my [caregiver] some questions.**

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**The gym has special toys and things to climb on. I will wait for the doctor to tell me what I can touch.**

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**There may be other kids in the gym. They are learning new exercises too! If the gym is too loud, I can ask for my own room.**

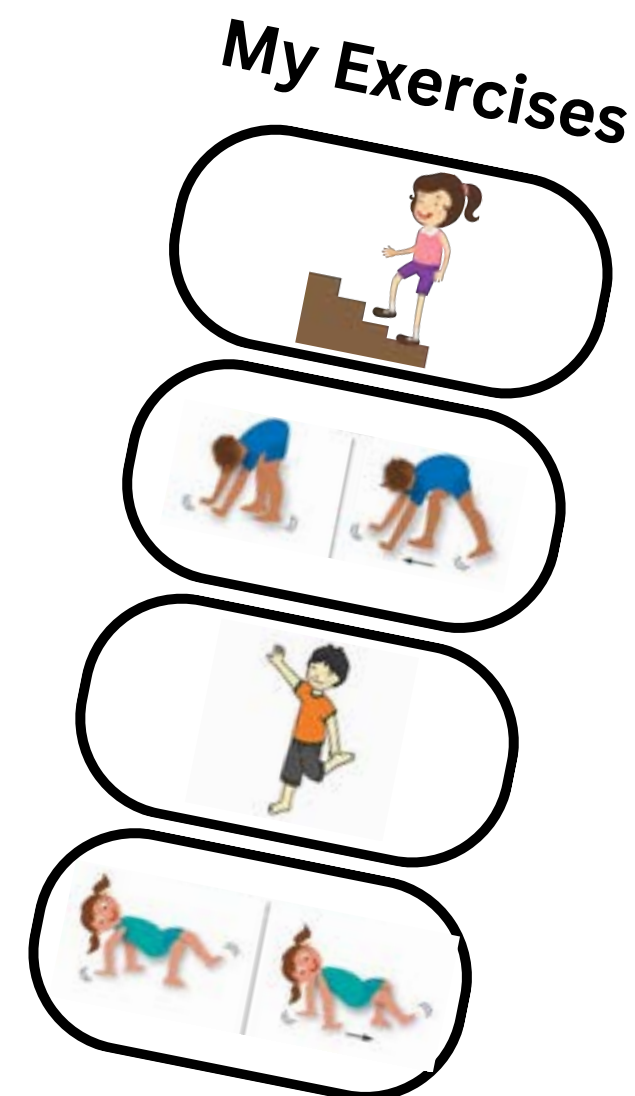
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The doctor will play with me as I do some exercises. Exercises are special ways to move my body so I can get stronger. I will wait in my chair between exercises to stay safe.

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**If I am tired or need a break, I can sit on the cube chair.**

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**The doctor may need to touch or move my arms or legs. This will not hurt.**

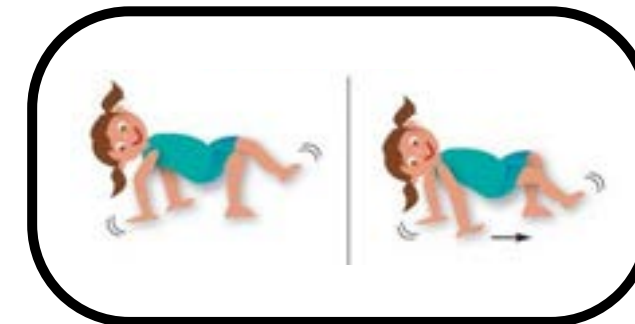
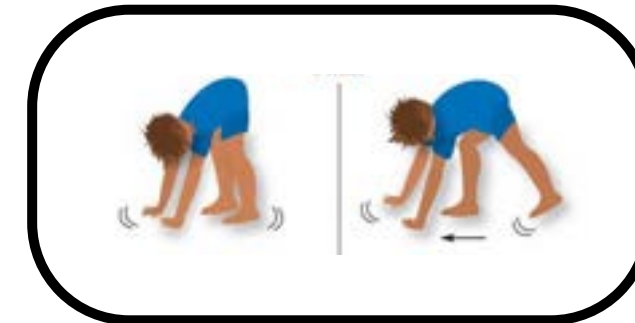
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The doctor will give me exercises that I can do at home to help me be stronger.

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## My Exercises



# The End

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**Note to caregivers: Please review the following pages for samples and templates of Frist-Then, reward charts, and a visual schedule.**

Parents/Caregivers:

Here is a sample “first-then” visual if your child is earning a reward after physical therapy. Please use the template on the next page and add your own picture of the reward your child is earning under the word, “then.”

You can present this by saying, “First \_\_\_\_\_, then Switch.”

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<b>FIRST</b>	<b>THEN</b>
	



**FIRST**

**THEN**

**“First \_\_\_\_\_, then \_\_\_\_\_.”**





A reward chart can help the child understand how they will earn their reward.

This can increase motivation during the appointment.

Please customize with a picture of what your child is motivated to earn on the next page.

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**I'M WORKING FOR**



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# I'M WORKING FOR

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## Visual Schedules

If your child benefits from the use of visual schedules, the next page may be helpful. As you point to each picture, you can briefly explain what will happen:

First, you will clean your hands with hand sanitizer.

Next, the exercise doctor will ask us some questions.

Then, the doctor will play with you, and you will do some exercises. You can sit in the chair while you wait, or if you need a break.

Then you will be all done and can *[insert reward here]*!

