



NATIONAL
BLEEDING DISORDERS
FOUNDATION
Formerly NHF

Working for Success

Matching your Physical Abilities
and Job Requirements



Written By:

Kimberly Baumann, BA, MPT
Sherry Herman-Hilker, PT, MS
Jennifer Newman, PT, MSPT

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following collaborators for their contribution to the content:

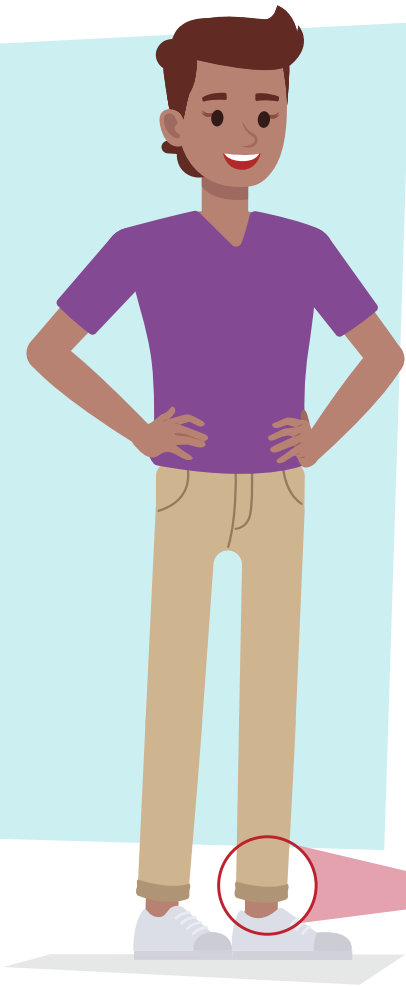
Hemophilia Treatment Center Physical Therapy Collaborative (HTC-PTC)
Ryan J. Rushton PT, DPT, MHA, CLT
Kori Williams PT, DPT
Luke Smith PT, DPT, OCS, CEAS, USAW-1
Many thanks to those with bleeding disorders who shared their insights during the creation of this document.
Additionally, thanks to Lena Volland PT, DPT and Kate Nammacher, MPH for their insights and review.

This publication was developed through the support of NBDF's 2023 Community Education Program sponsors: BioMarin, CSL Behring, Grifols, Genentech, Hemophilia Alliance, Sangamo, Sanofi, and Takeda. The information contained in this publication is general information only. NBDF does not give medical advice or engage in the practice of medicine. NBDF under no circumstances recommends particular treatments for specific individuals and in all cases recommends that you consult your physician or local treatment center before pursuing any course of treatment. This information also is not intended to offer job advice or recommendations, but rather to help you organize information and resources when choosing a job.

©2023 National Bleeding Disorders Foundation. Material in this publication may not be reproduced without express permission from the National Bleeding Disorders Foundation.

Table of Contents

Getting Started	4
Risks vs. Benefits	5
How to Assess Risk	6
Physical Preparedness	7
Assessing Physical Aspects of a Job	9
Explore Your Job: A Tool for Success	11
Job Assessment Tool Worksheet.....	12
Review of Job Assessment Tool	14
Resources.....	15



Meet Alex.

an adult with a bleeding disorder. Alex has a history of ankle bleeding and now has limited motion in one ankle. This makes walking long distances and on uneven surfaces hard. Alex's job requires walking and standing most of the shift. This is causing more ankle pain. As a result, Alex is looking for a new job.

As you continue to read, Alex's story will provide a guide for how to use this booklet.

Finding a match.

Keeping the ankle with limited motion as healthy as possible is important to Alex. Alex is looking for a new job that is a better match between physical abilities and job demands.

Getting Started

Choosing a career path or a job is one of the most exciting things you will do. It can impact your quality of life in many ways! Along with your interests, desires, and skills, it is also important to think about the physical demands of the job. Finding a match between your physical abilities and the job demands will help you be successful without harming your body.

Risks vs. Benefits

If you have chosen a job or have a career in mind, you may already know the benefits. However, to see the whole picture, look at the benefits and risks together.

This can be very helpful to guide your decision.

Most things in life carry some risk. You have likely learned a lot about considering risk while living with a bleeding disorder.

'Will I get an injury or bleed from a particular sport or activity?'

'Should I do an extra infusion before going out with friends?'

'Should I change my prophylaxis schedule when I go on vacation?'

Thinking about the risks of your job or career is also important.

'Can I perform my job safely?'

'Is this job a good match for me?'

'Can I do this job with some modifications or accommodations?'

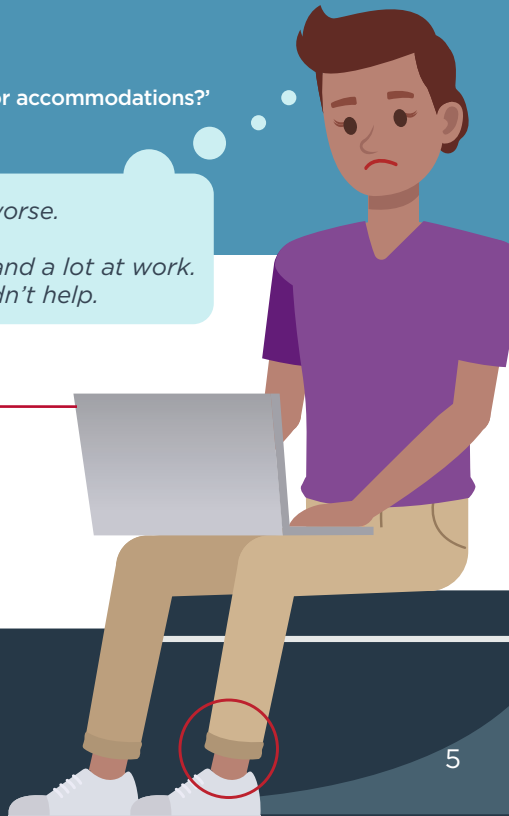
Yes, but my ankle pain is getting worse.

No, not anymore.

*No, because I need to walk and stand a lot at work.
I tried an ankle brace, but it didn't help.*

Considering the risk.

Alex is assessing the risks of their current job by answering some important questions and thinking about their ankle health.



How to Assess Risk

1. Identify the part of the job that might cause you harm. Find the hazards.
2. Think about how each hazard impacts you personally.
3. Think about ways to reduce the risk.

Benefits of Assessing Risks

If a job causes bleeding or pain, this can lead to missed workdays, lack of productivity at work, and stress. In some cases this can result in losing your job or having to quit. Being successful at your job depends on being able to do the work consistently. Assessing risk and preparing yourself and your workplace can increase the chance of good performance and success in the workplace.



Protect and prepare your body



Reduce injuries



Limit missed workdays



Modify the work environment

The next part of this booklet will help you to identify:

- your strengths and physical preparedness
- your limitations and things that might make the job hard
- the physical risks and benefits associated with your job or a potential job

Work closely with your Hemophilia Treatment Center staff when thinking about the risks and benefits of any job. Their primary objective is to support you in achieving your goals, including finding your way in the workplace.

Physical Preparedness

Whether looking for your first job, or considering a job change, there are many things to think about. Finding a good fit includes identifying your physical strengths and accounting for any physical limitations.

What are your strengths?

Ask yourself some questions like these:



What are my physical strengths?

- “I have full strength and function in my arms that allows me to do lifting without difficulty.”
- “I am able to sit comfortably and do computer work.”
- “I have no limitations with joints or muscles in my legs.”



How do I keep my joints and muscles healthy?

- “I follow my prescribed medication schedule.”
- “I participate in a regular exercise program to keep my joints and muscles healthy and to prevent injuries.”
- “I work with a physical therapist to find ways to strengthen my muscles and joints.”



Alex has good upper body strength and mobility and no problems doing work with shoulders, elbows, wrists or hands.


Alex also exercises regularly while keeping up with prescribed medications.

What are your areas of limitation?


Identify any physical limitations you may have. Think about how your bleeding disorder may impact or be impacted by physical demands of the job you are considering. This can include limitations that make it harder to do your job. It can also be something that is made worse by the demands of the job. Accommodations can be made for many of these limitations, but it is important for you to ask yourself some questions:

- Do I have any motion or strength limitations?
- How long can I sit, stand, and walk without rest or changing position?
- Do I have any problems with balance or coordination?
- Do I have difficulty with repetitive motions with my arms or legs?
- Are there any movements or activities I know cause joint or muscle bleeding or pain?
- Do I have any bleeding that might affect my ability to do my job (e.g., heavy periods, nosebleeds)?
- Do I have any concerns about my ability to complete the job requirements long-term if this is my job for many years?

Understanding your specific strengths and limitations will help you start to focus on job opportunities that will be a good fit.



Because of Alex's ankle pain, it is important to consider a job that will not stress this joint.



Alex has poor ankle motion and balance and can't stand or walk for a long time.

Assessing Physical Aspects of a Job

Now that you have thought about your physical strengths and limitations, let's focus on the job you are considering. The time you spend performing a task, how often you do something difficult, the general structure of your day, and the status of your joint health will all impact your overall job performance and enjoyment. The table below will help you think about how these things may relate to your job.

Job Specifics	Upper Body	Lower Body
Joints/Body Regions Involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoulder • Elbow • Wrist • Hand • Neck • Back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hip • Knee • Ankle • Foot • Low Back • Pelvis
Surface Type/Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height • Angle • Time at surface • Surface stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tile, concrete, rubber floor • Indoor/outdoor • Even/uneven surface • Surface stability • Time on surface • Access to bathroom • Stairs/steps
Repetitive Motion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying, pinching, gripping, grasping, reaching, typing, shifting gears • Time performing each task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking, squatting, stooping, crawling, picking items up from the floor, climbing ladders, pushing a pedal • Time performing each task
Object Weight and Size		
Endurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift length • Number of breaks throughout day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift length • Number of breaks throughout the day • Walking distances • Standing and sitting time
Dress Code Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puncture free gloves • Padding/shields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steel toed boots • Dress shoes • Heels • Padding

Alex's **current job** requires lots of walking and standing on concrete and tile for most of an 8-hour shift while wearing dress shoes. Tasks that seem to irritate the ankle include squatting and pushing a cart up a ramp several times throughout the day. For Alex it is important to think about a new job that doesn't stress the ankle joint.

The **new job** under consideration involves sitting for most of the shift and performing computer work. There is a long walk from the parking lot to the desk, but otherwise the distance for walking is minimal. Occasionally, there is a requirement for lifting packages of paper and loading a copier. Alex is not concerned about these tasks because the elbows and upper body are in good condition.

After you have evaluated your prospective job requirements, there are a few additional items to consider:

Remember that the structure of your day may impact all aspects of job performance:

- How often can I take a break?
- How many days will I work in a row?
- Am I expected to work overtime?
- Am I required to be on call?

Certain parts of the job cannot be changed or modified:

- Where is the job located?
- Is there a bus stop or train or subway station nearby?
- How far away from my work location is the parking lot?

Consider your work environment:

- Is it easily accessible?
(ADA compliant: see resources section)
- Is the temperature regulated?
- Are there other potential hazards I may encounter?
(ice, wet surfaces, chemicals, etc.)



Explore your Job: A Tool for Success

This tool is designed to help you break down the physical demands of a job.

- **First**, list as many job tasks as you can that involve your upper and lower body.
- **Next**, fill in how often and how long each task is required to be done.
- **Finally**, place an X in the appropriate box and add helpful details to outline if you can do this easily, need modifications, or won't be able to do this task.

Here is an example of how Alex would complete the tool:

Upper Body	How Often <small>Always, sometimes, often, rarely, never</small>	How Long	I can do this	I can do this with effort or modification	I am unable to do this
Alex's old job: Lifting 5-10lb boxes	Sometimes throughout the day	< 1 hour total	X		
Alex's new job: Filling copy machine with paper (about 3 lbs)	Often, about 6 times a day	< 5 min total	X		
Lower Body	How Often <small>Always, sometimes, often, rarely, never</small>	How Long	I can do this	I can do this with effort or modification	I am unable to do this
Alex's old job: Standing and walking	Always	7-8 hours		Tried to modify using stool, and moved design location but I'm unable to do the job requirements anymore	X
Alex's new job: Walking from car to office	Rarely	2 times a day	X	I can use my cane if needed	

Now it's your turn. Complete the following tool with information about your current job and/or a new job you are considering. Use the example from Alex as a guide.

Working for Success

Matching Your Physical Abilities and Job Requirements

Job Name: _____		Shift Length: _____			
Upper Body	How Often Always, sometimes, often, rarely, never	How Long	I can do this	I can do this with effort or modification	I am unable to do this

Job Name: _____ Shift Length: _____

Lower Body	How Often Always, sometimes, often, rarely, never	How Long	I can do this	I can do this with effort or modification	I am unable to do this

Now that you have completed the tool, let's discuss how to use this information to help you be successful in your current job or the job you are considering. **It can also be helpful to talk about this with your Hemophilia Treatment Center team and your employer.**

1. Start by reviewing the tool and notice how many red or yellow items you have.

- Do you notice that there are more yellow and/or red items in your upper body or your lower body?

2. Look at the various modifications you have made or could make.

- What modifications have been made that are working well?
- Are there any changes needed to your existing modifications?
- Are there more modifications that could be made right now to make completing your job easier?
- Are there modifications that could be requested at another job?

3. Are there areas identified in the red column that are required at your job that you are unable to modify?

- What does this mean for your success at your job?
- Are you harming your joints or muscles by completing those tasks?

4. Are there additional things you should be thinking about?

- Do you need to ask for help from your coworkers more often?
- Are there other roles within the company where you would be more successful?
- Are there things you want to discuss with your HTC?
- Are there things that you want to discuss with your employer?

After reviewing all this information, you should be able to place your current job or the job you are considering into one of the following buckets:



This job is a good fit for my physical abilities.



This job is a good fit, but I need to modify some tasks to be successful.



This job is a good fit right now, but in the next few years I need to start thinking about different opportunities.



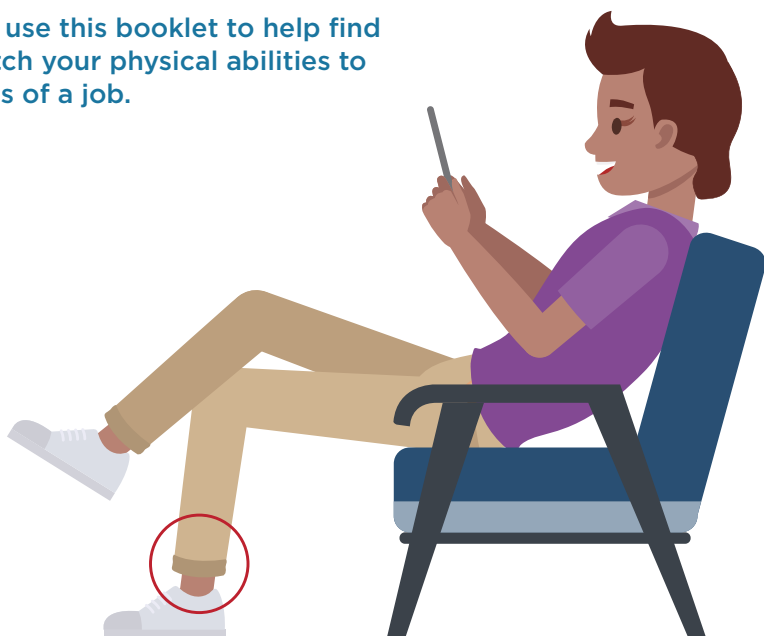
I am not sure if this is the right job for me.



This job is not a good fit for me.

Using this new information can be challenging and making a final job decision may still take some work. Consider talking with your Hemophilia Treatment Center and your support network as you continue this path to success.

Continue to use this booklet to help find ways to match your physical abilities to the demands of a job.



Resources

There are resources available to help with topics such as obtaining a disability parking permit, how to access medical leave, what to ask in an interview if you have a physical limitation, talking with Human Resources and many others.

Here are 4 key resources to get you started:

- Your Hemophilia Treatment Center
- Americans with Disabilities Act <https://ada.gov>
- Job Accommodation Network <https://askjan.org>
- Steps for Living <https://stepsforliving.hemophilia.org>



NATIONAL
BLEEDING DISORDERS
FOUNDATION
Formerly NHF