

# EHLERS DANLOS SYNDROME

## WHAT IS IT?

An inherited connective tissue disorder where a gene mutation creates weakened collagen throughout the body. Collagen is a building block of several different systems throughout the body: musculoskeletal, neurological, gastrointestinal, and cardiovascular. This can cause a number of different symptoms with a wide variety of presentation between people

## POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS

### **Musculoskeletal**

pain, dislocations, muscle tightness, poor posture, headaches, chronic fatigue

### **Cardiovascular**

lightheadedness, dizziness, poor endurance, fainting, referred heart pain

### **Gastrointestinal**

constipation, IBS, issues with eating GERD, bloating

### **Neurological**

poor balance, poor coordination, increased pain perception

### **Other**

easy bruising, skin hyperextensibility, poor immune system, anxiety, depression, issues sleeping

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR ORTHOPEDIC

- Surgery should try to be avoided due to poor healing
- Possible issues with scar healing due to skin extensibility
- Muscle tightness is commonly due to muscle compensation for weakness instead of true muscle tightness
- Possible issues with pain medication and anesthesia
- Longer healing times
- Physical therapy is essential
- Use cadaver connective tissue to avoid re-tearing

## MODIFICATIONS FOR PATIENTS

- If the healthcare provider is not familiar with EDS, you may need to educate healthcare professionals on EDS
- Be prepared with documentation of your symptoms with context, medications and any lab reports (MRI, X-ray, blood work)
- Seek specialist referrals for doctors familiar with EDS