

WEIGHTED MODALITIES & THEIR BENEFITS

AND DIY VEST



As an OT we encounter a wide variety of children with sensory needs. One effective modality we frequently can use is weighted modalities, used by OTs. Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of the weighted modalities. Deep-touch pressure input provided by the weighted vests can decrease sensory modulation dysfunction by changing levels of arousal in the central nervous system, thereby resulting in positive functional and behavioral outcomes. (Lin et al., 2014). Additionally, these amazing tools provide deep pressure input and can be used as a calming tool which has been found to decrease activity levels, increase focus, and improve sleep. There are a few different ways to use weighted modalities, they can be in the form of weighted blankets, Lap pads, lap snakes, weighted wrist pads, weighted stuffed animals, weighted pillows, and even weighted eyemasks. Lap pads and lap snakes are tools that are more commonly used during seated tasks and can be placed on the child's lap or shoulders.

Incorporating weighted modalities into therapy sessions can significantly benefit children with sensory needs, enhance their ability to focus, remain calm, and achieve better sleep patterns (Weighted Blankets, 2014)

Instruments and equipment: The most effective vest is a multi-pocket vest. 8 pockets in the front, 8 pockets in the back, and 2 on the top of the shoulders. typically a vest is 10% of a person's body weight evenly distributed around the vest (Lin et al., 2014)

Who Benefits from a Weighted Vest?
Children with sensory processing difficulties, anxiety, Autism, or trauma-related diagnoses

★ **Other benefits of weighted modalities:**
Body awareness
Coordination

★ **How long should a weighted vest be worn?**

★ Self-awareness/emotional regulation

2-3 times a day, no longer than 15 minutes.



HOW TO MAKE A WEIGHTED VEST



What you'll need:

1. Sticky back Velcro for fabric
2. A fleece vest/or material of choice.
3. poly pellets, sand, or glass beads for weights.
4. polyfill, or stuffing from an old pillow or stuffed animal.
5. extra fabric or bags to make weighted bags.

Now let's make it together!



Choose your Vest:

1. Prepare the Weights: decide the total weight you want your vest to hold and measure out equal weighted bags.
2. Reinforce the Weights: Ensure weights are sealed, you tape or sew the bags into the vest.
3. Insert the Weights into the Vest: distribute weights evenly and add velcro to prevent shifting.
4. Adjust and Test the Vest for proper fitting: Try on the vest, and adjust for a snug fit.



References

OTR/L, C. S. (2023, June 4). Weighted Vests for Autism: Tips, Guidelines, and Benefits. NAPA.
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Weighted Blankets. (2014, February 14). Children's Therapy Corner.
<https://childrenstherapycorner.com/2014/02/weighted-blankets/>

Watch our YouTube video here! <https://youtu.be/drL1Ckjc3SA>