

Short of breath? Feeling tired? No energy?

Energy Conservation



What it is and
how it may
benefit you

Patient Information

Energy conservation

Energy conservation is all about planning your daily activities and finding more efficient ways of doing them.

Achieving a balance between activity and rest is a good way of managing your lifestyle so that you do not become over-tired or, alternatively, wary of any exertion or exercise.

How do you conserve energy?

1. Activity analysis

Everything you do from waking up to going to bed is classed as 'activity' and uses some form of energy.

For example, personal care, household tasks, leisure pursuits and work are common categories of activity and they require different types of energy.

Example:

Physical: *e.g. going upstairs, hanging out the washing*

Mental: *e.g. doing a crossword or mental arithmetic*

Emotional: *e.g. experiencing mood swings, dwelling on personal or family problems*

We tend to think of daily activities in general terms, e.g. 'housework', but this can be broken down into many different tasks.

Try to think of ways to plan, pace and prioritise what you do. This might include not doing unnecessary activities, such as vacuuming every day. It might mean getting assistance.

For example, instead of washing the car manually, you could use the car wash.

Think of ways to organise your time, space and methods e.g. plan daily/weekly schedules and have frequently used items to hand.

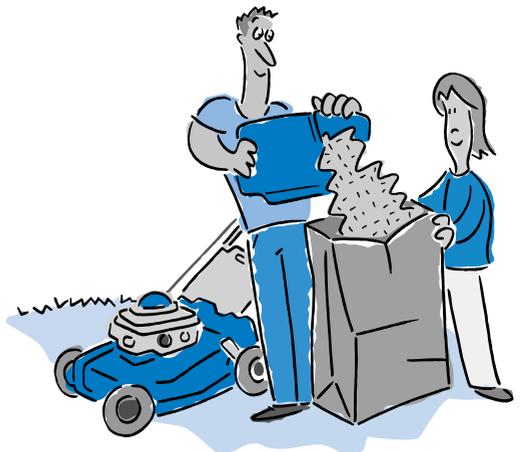
Further examples of how to modify everyday activities are included at the end.

2. Grading activity

Consider the different demands of various activities. It may seem odd to analyse what we do in such detail but it can help us to decide what has to be done, what we would like to do and what can be left.

Think about the following aspects of activity:

- Time:** How long something takes to complete; time of day
- Speed:** Will you be sitting, standing or strolling?
- Distance:** How far? Will you need a break?
- Rest:** Incorporate rest into strenuous or demanding activity
- Strength:** Limit time spent doing arduous tasks
- Resistance:** Mowing and vacuuming are good exercise but tiring
- Complexity:** Make activity simpler. Break it down into stages
- Psychological:** Consider the mood you are in; your motivation and stress
- Social:** What about others' perceptions? Would they mind if you rested or asked for help?



An example of grading an activity

Laundry/Ironing

- Whom?** Do I have to do it?
Can I leave it or get help?
- What?** Prioritise, plan and organise.
Does it have to be done today?
- How?** Simplify:
- Take it slowly and have regular rests
 - Lower the ironing board and sit down to iron, if possible
 - Use a lightweight iron
 - Use easy-iron clothes conditioner/starch spray
 - Buy crease resistant clothes
 - Assemble necessary items beforehand.
- When?** Assess when your energy levels are at their peak
- Where?** In a light, well ventilated room? Upstairs?

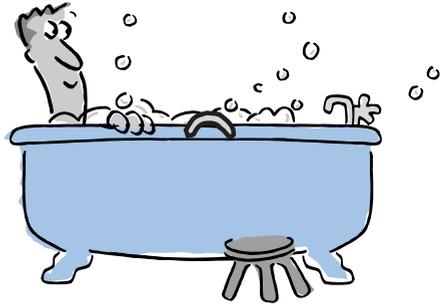


Energy conservation strategies

Some handy hints on modifying activity

Bathing and showering

- Sit on a chair/stool to wash or shave. Support elbows on sink/table
- Have all toiletries/towels to hand
- If possible, request help with washing your hair
- Use grab rails to steady yourself
- Use a long-handled sponge, back brush or towel sling
- A bathrobe will dry you with less effort than towel drying
- Maintain a warm temperature for water.



Making the bed

- Do it in stages and sit down when necessary
- Duvets generally require less work than sheets and blankets
- Make one side at a time and remember to exhale slowly as you do strenuous tasks.

Cooking

- Use healthy ready meals as a speedy alternative
- Plan ahead, e.g. write shopping lists, batch cooking and stock the freezer
- Sit down to prepare food
- Slide heavy dishes and pans - do not lift or overfill
- Fill the kettle using a jug or use a travel kettle
- Use a kitchen trolley or eat in the kitchen.

Washing the dishes

- Sit at the sink to do dishes
- Soak dirty dishes and leave to air dry
- Consider having a dishwasher (at your working height to prevent stooping).



Shopping

- Plan weekly menus and keep a list as you run out of food stuff
- Familiarise yourself with the supermarket layout and shop methodically
- Order via the Internet or make use of home delivery services
- Ask for help in packing your bags and reaching for items up high or low down
- Load bags half full to aid carrying
- Shop at quiet times so that it is a less stressful, rushed experience.



Other domestic chores

- Transport laundry in a basket or cart
- Have the washer/drier raised to avoid bending down
- When vacuuming, regulate your breaths with the push-pull motion
- Avoid using aerosol-type cleaning products which, for some people, can irritate the airways - use waxes, creams or liquids instead
- Clean the floor with a long-handled mop.

Leisure

- Do not give up what you enjoy doing - the key is finding a balance between activity and rest
- When gardening, sit down and use a long-handled trowel or hoe. Consider having raised flower beds or a window box
- Remember your controlled breathing techniques - when bowling, golfing, cycling, etc. inhale...exhale...execute the movement, i.e. bend to bowl, swing to hit the golf ball, push the pedal forward etc.
- Worried about taking exercise? Check with your GP, physiotherapist or occupational therapist.

Finally, Remember 'the 5 Ps'!

- 1. Plan** Organise what you do. Get rid of distractions and unnecessary tasks
- 2. Pace** Take it slowly. Do not rush and become frustrated or over-tired
- 3. Prioritise** Consider what the important tasks are. Make time for good quality rest
- 4. Posture** Look after your spine and maintain a good posture
- 5. Proficiency** Practise energy conservation techniques and reap the benefits!

Useful Contacts

ORGANISATIONS

'Breathe Easy'

'Breathe Easy' is a nationwide support group and social club for people with respiratory conditions.

www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/breathe-easy

British Lung Foundation

Helpline: 0300 0030555 www.blf.org.uk

'No Panic'

A voluntary charity whose aim is to support and rehabilitate people suffering from panic attacks and various anxiety disorders.

Helpline: 0844 9674848 www.nopanic.org.uk

email: admin@nopanic.org.uk

BOOKS

Managing Stress in a Changing World - the one stop Stress Reduction Kit

Susan Balfour, Aurum Press, London 1998

Teach Yourself Relaxation

Richard Craize, Hodder & Stoughton, London 1998

Free Yourself from Harmful Stress

Trevor Powell, Dorling Kindersley, London 1997

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CASSETTES

Contact your local library or bookshop for advice on relaxation tapes/ CDs.

Albert Smith Health Cassettes/CDs

83 Frinton Road, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex CO13 0PA
Telephone: 01255 678008 Fax: 01255 675040

Aleph One Ltd.

The Old Courthouse, Bottisham, Cambridge CB5 9BA

Telephone: 01223 811679 www.aleph1.co.uk

This is a source of several kinds of aids for dealing with stress and its consequences e.g. CDs, books, biofeedback instruments.

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

Trust Values

Courtesy and respect

- A welcoming and positive attitude
- Polite, friendly and interested in people
- Value and respect people as individuals
So people feel **welcome**

Attentively kind and helpful

- Look out for dignity, privacy & humanity
- Attentive, responsive & take time to help
- Visible presence of staff to provide care
So people feel **cared for**

Responsive communication

- Listen to people & answer their questions
- Keep people clearly informed
- Involve people
So people feel **in control**

Effective and professional

- Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring
- Effective care / services from joined up teams
- Organised and timely, looking to improve
So people feel **safe**



The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240

Author:
Physiotherapy & Occupational
Therapy Department

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