

# Energy Conservation

## What is Activity Tolerance?

Activity tolerance describes the amount of activity a person can manage before feeling too tired or breathless. People with low activity tolerance find it hard and therefore stop doing the things they need and want to do. Modifying the environment, the activities and how they are done can help conserve energy and compensate for poor activity tolerance.



## Feeling Breathless? Try these!

### Sitting or Standing



Lean forwards  
against a table or  
railing

### Sitting



Lean forwards, and  
rest both elbows on  
your knees.

### Sitting or Standing



Lean against the  
backrest of a chair or  
the wall, relax your  
neck and shoulders.

## 4 'P' Strategies for Energy Conservation

### Plan

- Break activities down into smaller tasks
- Do the most tiring activities when you have the most energy

### Quick Tips

To understand your energy levels ask yourself:

1. When are your energy levels high/low?
2. What makes you more tired?
3. What makes you less tired?

### Prioritise

- List all the things you need to do in a day or week
- Eliminate tasks that are neither urgent nor important
- Prioritise the most meaningful and urgent tasks
- Delegate tasks to family members and friends if they are less important for you to do yourself



### Positioning

- Place commonly used items in the area that they will be used, and keep them at waist level
- Complete tasks in sitting as much as possible
- Use proper lifting techniques
- Gather all the items you need before starting each task



### Pace

#### Things to Do

- Take breaks before you're tired
- Allow more time to do activities
- Distribute activities that require lots of energy throughout your day/week

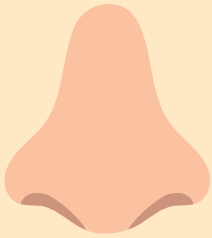
#### Things Not to Do

- Rush through all your daily activities then rest
- Insist on completing too many things at one time
- Hold your breath

## Pursed Lip Breathing

Pursed lip breathing makes each breath more effective and can slow the pace of breathing. Try it using the steps below:

1



With your mouth closed, breathe in slowly through your nose. Some people find it helpful to count to themselves

"Breathe in, one, two..."

2



Pucker, or "purse" your lips as if you were going to whistle or gently blow out a candle

3



Slowly breathe out through your pursed lips. Some people find it helpful to count to themselves

"...breathe out, one, two, three, four".

Repeat for 5-10 times, or until you feel less breathless

### Quick Tips

Use technology to reduce the amount of effort required to do your daily activities. For example, use a washing machine and/or vacuum cleaner to reduce the amount of energy used doing household chores!

Contributed by Occupational Therapy, Rehabilitation, Allied Health Services

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