

Pain Coping and Goal Setting

1. "Pain stops me from _____ all the time."

2. "I do not allow pain to stop me from _____ but I usually suffer after that."

If you notice that you have been adopting either of these approaches, learning a **pacing strategy** may be the solution for you.

Sit at the desk for _____ mins, get up to move, and walk to the pantry.



Sit until my pain is ___/10.

Iron clothes for _____ mins, take a short break.



Iron clothes until I could not tolerate the knee pain, needs to find a place to sit down.

Walk my dog for _____ mins throughout the day.



Go for a full half a day walk with my dog until the pain persist for 3-4 days.



Time-contingent



Pain-contingent

What is Goal Setting?

Decide what your goals are first: what do you value the most?

- Go to the market and back for 4 consecutive days.
- Be able to walk 45 minutes with my husband every day.

Step 1: Set the baseline

(I can walk 30min without worsening my back pain. 80% = 24min)

Step 2: Repeat the task daily

(Walk 24min every day, good AND bad days)

Step 3: Increase by 10% per week

(1st week = 24min, 2nd week = 27min)

Step 4: Build up your activity levels using SMART goals

(To be able to walk with my husband every evening for 45min in 4 months.)

Step 5: Small bits often

(Do my housework in chunks of 30 minutes instead of full 2 hours at one go)

Step 6: Take regular planned relaxation periods

(I plan to sit on the couch drinking tea while listening to my favourite radio program between chores.)

Why a pain-contingent method is seldom useful?
The graph below will explain why.

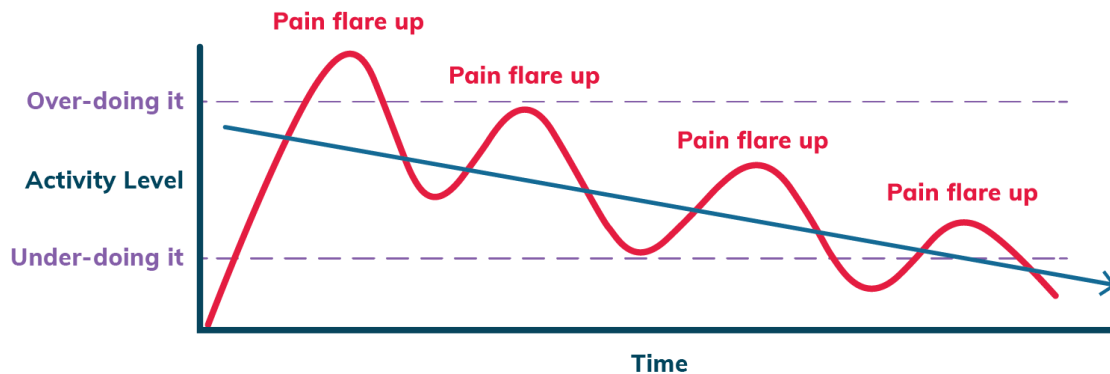
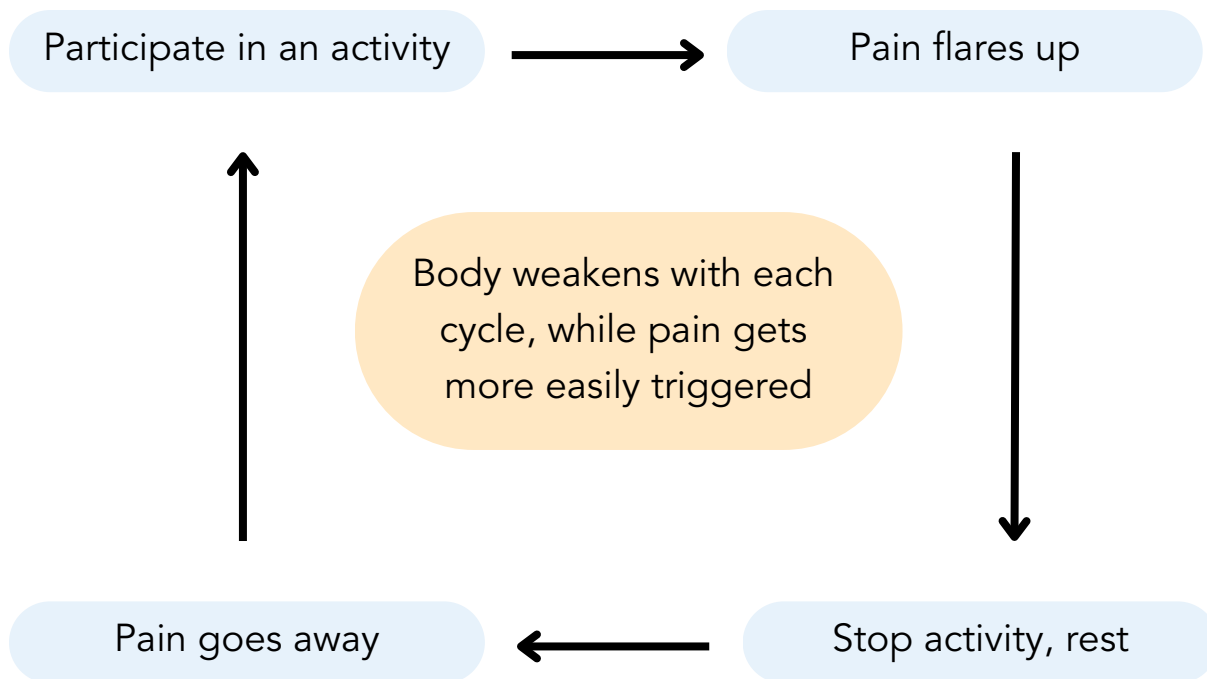


Image from: <https://aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain/brain-injury/fatigue/boom-and-bust>



Contributed by Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation, Allied Health Services

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