

Energy Conservation

Energy conservation is a way to use your energy wisely while doing everyday activities. By following the principles of energy conservation, you can create a balanced lifestyle. You can ensure you have enough energy to do the things you enjoy.

You will have time:

- To take care of yourself
- To be productive
- To pursue leisure activities

Think about your body's energy stores as money in a bank account. You make deposits and withdrawals based on a budget so that you have enough energy for all your daily activities. If you empty your bank account of energy, you will not have enough to do all that you need to in a day.

You can balance your energy budget by:

- Saving your energy
- Restoring your energy
- Using your energy wisely

Use Your Energy Wisely

Planning:

- Take time each evening to plan out the next day.
- Take time each week to plan out the next week.
- List activities and tasks that need to be done. Remember to include rest breaks.
- Spread heavier tasks out over the week. Do harder activities when you feel best.

Pacing:

- Give yourself plenty of time to do each task. Work steadily. Try not to rush.
- Balance activity with rest breaks or relaxation time. Rest before you are tired.
- Break up a large task by doing a little each day. Alternate heavy and light tasks.

Prioritizing:

- Decide what is most important to you, somewhat important and least important.
- Do tasks yourself that only you can do. Allow people to help you whenever possible.
- Be sure to include activities that you enjoy doing.

Positioning:

- Sit whenever you can: to wash, dress or prepare ingredients for cooking.
- Use tools to make tasks easier (i.e. use a long handled reacher and elastic shoe laces for getting dressed).
- Take a break to stretch and move around every 15 minutes.

Restoring Your Energy

Try to include activities in your day that make you feel good and add to your energy bank. For example, set aside a time to read a good book, practice relaxation or talk to a friend or relative on the phone.

Saving Your Energy

Set up

- Gather the items you need before you start. Keep things within reach to avoid bending or over reaching.
- Use good lighting and space for performing each task.
- Plan to do things when you are feeling best.

Bathing / Washing

- Sit on a shower bench or shower chair and use a handheld showerhead.
- Use moderate temperature water rather than hot (heat makes you tired).
- Use a long handled sponge or brush to reach your feet and back.
- Sit to dry off or use a terry cloth robe.

Grooming

- Sit while brushing your teeth or shaving.
- Use a long handled brush or comb to reduce the need to reach above your head.
- Use a raised toilet seat.
- Use large or rubberized handles if your hands are weak.

Dressing

- Sit to dress.
- Use a long handled reacher, shoe horn and sock aid.
- Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes that are easy to take on and off.
- If possible, bring your foot to your knee instead of bending over.
- Allow yourself lots of time so you don't need to rush.

Meal Preparation and Grocery Shopping

- Plan out specific tasks before you start.
Assemble all the ingredients you need. Make a list to minimize trips to the store.
- Plan meals ahead. Cook larger amounts and freeze some for another day.
- Push rather than lift things. Use a wheeled cart or walker with a basket to help you carry items at home or in a store.
- Use a grocery or meal delivery service.

More suggestions from your Occupational Therapist:

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