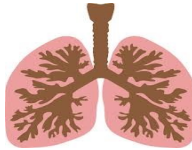




Cheshire and Wirral
Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

Energy Conservation

People with lung conditions often get short of breath or tired, or both, doing daily tasks such as getting dressed or doing jobs around the house.



What is 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 central to managing your lifestyle so that you do not become overtired or alternatively wary of any exercise.



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 chores, leisure pursuits and work are common categories of activity and require different types of energy.



Example

Physical - going upstairs, hanging washing out.

Mental- doing a cross word or puzzle.

Emotional - 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 different tasks.

What is the 'Boom/Bust Cycle'?

The boom and bust cycle is peaks of over activity (Boom) and troughs of underactivity (Bust)

For example, on a good day when we have more energy it is tempting to do all the jobs or activities that we have previously avoided.

If you do this, you may do more than your body is used to. As a result you can experience fatigue and tiredness and feel more short of breath. This leads to the 'bust' phase, where you have no energy. To recover from this 'bust' phase you are forced to rest, sometimes even for a few days.

After a few days' rest, you feel better and start the over-activity again and so this harmful cycle goes on.

But as time goes on you are able to do less and less even on the 'boom' days and the 'bust' periods last longer. This is because each period of under-activity ('bust') results in a drop in fitness.

To avoid this cycle grade your activity.



Grading Activity

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

AN EXAMPLE OF GRADING ACTIVITY

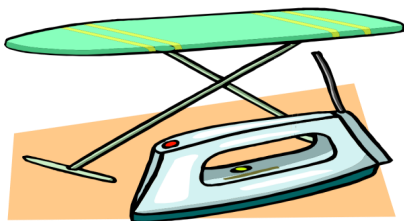
Ironing

Pace - Take it slowly and take regular rests

Plan - Use easy to iron clothes or crease resistant. Use a lightweight iron.

Position - Lower the ironing board and sit or use a perching stool

Prioritise - Do I have to do it? Can I leave it or get help?



THINK ABOUT THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF ACTIVITY.



Time-how long something takes to complete or what time of day it is.

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 doing arduous tasks.



Resistance - Mowing and vacuuming are good exercise but can be tiring.

Complexity-make activity simpler, break it down into stages.



Psychological-consider the mood that you are in; are you motivated/stressed.

Social-what about others perception, would they mind if you rested or asked for help.

SOME HANDY HINTS ON MODIFYING ACTIVITY

Bathing and Showering

- Sit on a chair/stool to wash or shave, support elbows on the sink.
- Have toiletries/towels to hand.
- If possible, request help with washing your hair.
- Use a long handled sponge, brush or sling.
- A bathrobe will dry you with less effort than towel drying.
- Maintain a warm temperature of water.





Making the Bed

- Do it in stages and sit down when necessary.
- Duvets are generally easier than sheets and blankets.
- Make one side at a time and remember to exhale slowly as you do strenuous tasks.
- Ask for help!

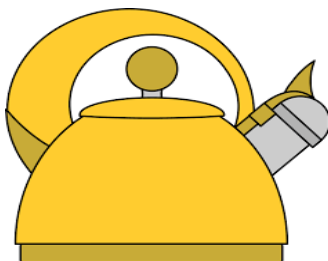
Remember to 'blow as you go'



Cooking



- Use convenience meals as an alternative.
- Plan ahead, write shopping lists and stock the freezer.
- Sit down to prepare food.
- Slide heavy dishes and pans, do not lift or overfill.
- Use a small or travel kettle.
- Use a kitchen trolley or eat in the Kitchen.





Washing the Dishes

- Sit at the sink to do the dishes, a perching stool is ideal for this.
- Soak dirty dishes
- Leave cutlery and crockery 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 items.

- Familiarise yourself with the supermarket layout and shop methodically.
- Order shopping online for delivery.
- Load bags half full to aid carrying.
- Shop at quieter times, so that it is a less stressful, rushed experience.



We hope that this leaflet has helped you to find ways to be able to go about the activities that you enjoy as well as those chores you may prefer to avoid. If you would like more help or advice with energy conservation, please contact our team.

If you require translation services or a copy of this document in other languages, audio tape, Braille or larger print, please speak to a member of CWP staff or e-mail info@cwps.nhs.uk

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