

Occupational Therapy

## Quick Tips for Conserving Your Energy

It is important to have enough energy each day to do the activities you need and want to do.

Fatigue is when you feel tired all over your body, all of the time (sounds like 'fah-teeg'). Fatigue is common when you are sick or managing an illness.

Everything you do during the day requires energy. This includes taking a shower, getting dressed, making meals, cleaning, doing laundry, driving, and going to work.

This sheet lists a few ways that can help you have enough energy to do more and feel less tired. We call these **Energy Conservation** techniques.

### Set Priorities

- Make a list of what needs to be done.
- Decide what needs to be done today and what can wait until another day.

### Plan Ahead

- Make a schedule of your activities for your day, week, and month.
  - Write them in your calendar.
  - Remember to include time for fun, family, and friends.
- To do activities, choose a time of the day when you have the most energy.
- Do important things first.
- Plan rest breaks into your schedule (5 to 10 minutes every hour). Short breaks taken often are more helpful than one long break.
- Collect all of the supplies you need before you start an activity.
- Give yourself enough time to complete an activity. When you rush, you use more energy.
- Ask for help and accept it when offered.

## Quick Tips for Conserving Your Energy- *continued*

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### Change your home set-up

- Keep items you use frequently in a place you can reach easily.
- Arrange furniture so you have more space to move around.
- Turn lights on so you don't have to use energy to find your way around in the dark.
- Adjust the room temperature to stay comfortable. When you are cold, you use energy to warm your body up.
- Use good body positioning:
  - Adjust the height of your work surface so it is 1 to 2 inches (2.5 to 5 cm) below your elbow level.
  - When lifting, bend at the knees and not from the waist.
  - Lift heavy items with another person.

### Other ways to conserve energy

- Sit down to do activities when you can.
- For activities that need more energy, spread them out throughout your day or week.
- Use items that help you save energy such as a long-handled reacher, jar openers, and light-weight pots and dishes.
- Change the way you do things.
  - Let your dishes air dry.
  - Put your bathrobe on right out of the bath and let the robe dry you off.
- Have items delivered to your home such as groceries.

By saving your energy, you can have more energy to do the things you enjoy.

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Now, take time to make a plan.

Which of these Energy Conservation techniques will you do?

*In the next week, I will:*

*In the next month, I will:*

If you have questions about conserving energy, contact your occupational therapist.

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This information does not replace the advice given to you by your health care provider.