

Carers Information Card - How to manage fatigue and conserve energy

Causes of Fatigue:

- Disease itself
- Inactivity
- Poor nutrition
- Insufficient rest
- Poor sleep
- Stress / tension
- Depression
- Side effects of medication



What is Energy Conservation?

Energy conservation involves learning to make the most of your energy and reduce unnecessary activities. This allows you more time to do essential tasks as well as enjoyable activities.

Strategies – The six P's

1. Planning

- Organise your time
- Make a list of tasks for the week
- How can they be done?
- Who can help?
- Spread the heavier jobs over time / the week

2. Prioritise

- Prioritise the activities that are meaningful to you
- Accept help from others

3. Pace

- Avoid doing too much in one day
- Take regular rest breaks, rest / activity / rest
- Do not rush

4. Positioning

- Sit when possible
- Use lightweight equipment
- Store equipment within easy reach e.g. store commonly used kitchen appliances at bench height

5. Practice

- "Practice makes perfect"
- Old habits die hard

6. Physical fitness

- Increased fitness= increased endurance



Helpful Hints for home:

- Use lightweight items
- Have groceries delivered
- Sit where possible to do things
- Clean as you go
- Keep often used utensils and products near work areas
- Sort clothes on the table
- Use a clotheshorse rather than the clothesline
- Wheel equipment and washing around in trolley
- Ensure good posture, straight back and bend at hips and knees when in the garden
- Avoid working outside in the heat of the day
- Drink lots of water
- Accept offers of help

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Purpose: To provide information that reinforces the education and suggestions provided by nursing or support staff to assist carers to be able to manage fatigue and conserve energy for both themselves and their loved one.

Note: If you have any concerns, please let nursing or support staff know.

Please contact: The Community Palliative Care Service if you have any concerns.

Further Information: www.caresearch.com.au

Acknowledgements: Occupational Therapy Department – Swan Hill District Health

Disclaimer: The Community Palliative Care Service and all persons involved in producing this information sheet will not be held responsible for any adverse event or loss from the implementation of all or part of this information. All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the item this information sheet pertains to is maintained to a high safety standard.

**Please return this card to the Community Palliative Care Service when no longer required.
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