

## **Managing activity levels – planning, pacing and prioritising**

If you have fatigue, planning ahead is important. Plan your day so that you have time to do the things you want to do most.

- Planning –
  - Prevents using all resources at once. Reduces frustration.
  - How long will the job take, what needs to be done, what's the best time to do it.
  - Check in with yourself.

It's important to be realistic about what you can do. You can use the fatigue diary to write down the times when you feel your best and when you feel most tired.

While some people feel less tired in the mornings, others cope better in the afternoon. Try to plan bigger tasks to fit in with the time of day when you feel least tired. Pace yourself, and plan enough rest and sleep periods. It makes sense to plan a period of rest after a period of activity. Some people also find that they need to rest after meals.

Short naps and rest periods are useful, however, you need to balance them with some activity or exercise. Too much rest isn't always a good thing as your muscles can weaken, which can make your fatigue worse. It's important that any daytime rest doesn't stop you from sleeping at night.

- Pacing –
  - Plan rest breaks: for example, relaxation, listening to/watching the TV, reading a book/magazine, napping.
  - Fatigue diaries can be helpful for noticing patterns in fatigue or triggers for increased fatigue.

Keeping a note of your energy levels will help you identify the days and times when you have more energy. However, you may have to accept that you won't be able to do everything you used to do. It

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may help to decide early on which activities you're prepared to give up, at least until you feel more able to do them again.

- Prioritising –
  - What do you want to achieve in the day.
  - Can there be different steps to a bigger task that can be done throughout the day?
  
- Conserving energy –
  - Heat – cooler environments are less tiring
  - Posture – standing needs more energy than sitting, so try modifying tasks to be completed while sitting.
  - Equipment – labour saving devices.
  - Organise and de-clutter – things within easy reach, always in the same place then time and energy is not spent looking.
  - Transportation – try to reduce the amount of time walking around (but this needs to be balanced against avoiding deconditioning).