

Pace Yourself

Coping With Illness

Pacing ourselves is one of the most important things we all have to learn. A prime consideration in regulating the tempo of daily living should be the awareness that your limits will fluctuate from day to day or even hour to hour.

There will be times when you will wake up and know almost immediately it is a day for just loafing. Or you may awake feeling super and up to a special task that you have been saving for a good day. The important thing is to learn to trust your own feelings and go with them.

Don't take on more than you can handle comfortably and when you feel tired, QUIT. Remember, energy is like money in the bank – to be spent wisely. Repeated overspending puts one in debt physically as well as financially.

There will, of course, be many occasions when you may want to expend a little more physical energy than usual. These could range from washing windows to enjoying sex.

It is good for us to try to extend ourselves, if it is done with a little common sense. Here are a few suggestions that will help.

- Wait until an hour or more after eating. Digestion draws blood, with its oxygen, away from muscles leaving them less able to cope with extra demands. This is the very same reason that children are taught not to go swimming right after meals.
- You may find you feel your best soon after taking your medicine or having breathing treatment.
- Those who have had an aerosol inhaler prescribed by their physician can use it to help a special effort, being careful NEVER to use more than prescribed.
- Pace yourself and don't rush.
- If you feel breathless, use pursed up breathing. Remember – this really helps and you can do it anytime, any place.