

Save your energy

It will take you a number of weeks before you are able to do all of the activities you did before your hospital stay.

When you go home, it is important to remember that the activities you do every day may be as much work as exercise. A few examples are:

- climbing stairs
- housework such as preparing meals and doing dishes
- personal care such as bathing and dressing

Tips to save your energy when you go home:

✓ **Plan ahead**

Learn to plan your exercise and your activities. Ask questions such as, “Does this task really need to be done?” and “Must it be done by me?” Plan to do your activities at a time when you feel rested, such as in the morning.

✓ **Pace yourself**

Do only what you really need to do and rest between activities.
Stop before you are too tired!

✓ **Do not lift**

Do not lift, push or pull more than _____ pounds or _____ kilograms. Divide laundry, garbage and groceries into smaller piles. Use a wagon or cart. Slide rather than lift an object.

✓ **Avoid bending and reaching**

Long-handled tools make reaching easier. Keep things you use the most often within easy reach.

✓ **Sit down when you can**

Sit down when dressing, sorting laundry and preparing meals. You can use a tub chair in the shower.

✓ **Use good posture**

Use a chair with good back support. A footstool helps prevent pressure on the back of your legs.

✓ **Avoid straining or holding your breath**

This includes straining on the toilet, lifting heavy objects and trying to open stuck windows.

✓ **Avoid temperatures that are too hot or too cold**

Avoid exercising if it is too hot or too cold outside. Use warm water for showering. If you had surgery, you will not be able to take a tub bath until your incisions are healed.

✓ **Limit visitors**

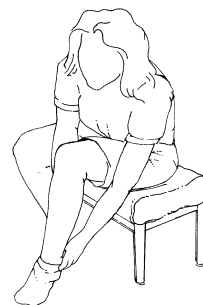
Rest is an important part of your recovery. Too many visitors or phone calls can be very tiring for you and can get in the way of your recovery. Limit your company to 2 short visits a day.

Although your family and friends care about you and want to see how you are doing, you may need to limit visiting times. Do not be afraid to tell your company that you need your rest as part of your recovery and excuse yourself from the room when you feel tired and need to rest.

Ways you can save your energy

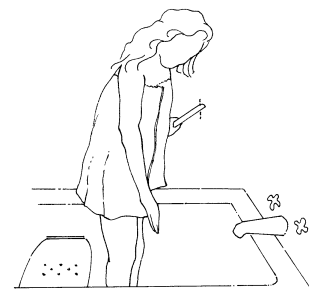
Dressing:

- sit when dressing
- have your clothes within arms reach
- wear loose-fitting clothing as it is easier to put on and take off
- dress the lower part of your body first as this takes up the most energy
- avoid bending



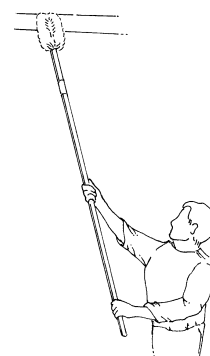
Grooming and bathing:

- sit on a stool or chair while washing, shaving or putting on make-up
- use a bath chair and hand-held shower to avoid standing
- use a long-handled sponge to clean yourself
- wear a long terrycloth housecoat to help dry off after bathing



Cleaning:

- clean one room at a time — if cleaning the whole house, spread the job over a number of days
- use long-handled broom and dust pans to avoid bending
- have someone vacuum for you



Kitchen work:

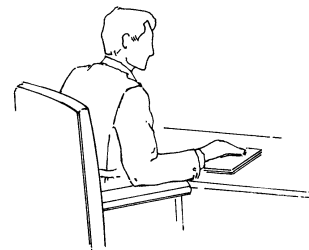
- store items used most often in the easiest place to reach
- sit to prepare food
- organize your work ahead of time
- prepare extra at meals and freeze for a future use
- allow dishes to air dry

**Shopping:**

- use a delivery service to your home where possible
- use a cart to move shopping bags rather than carry them
- if you need to carry shopping bags, divide into smaller loads and hold them close to your body

**Working at a desk:**

- remember that posture is very important
- organize your work space to avoid bending and reaching
- take frequent stretch breaks

**Yard work:**

- do a little bit at a time
- avoid using your arms over and over such as raking, hoeing or weeding
- have someone help you with heavier jobs

