



UNC REX  
HEALTHCARE

## **Energy Conservation / Work Simplification**

UNC REX Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation

# What is work simplification?

The performance of tasks in the  
**SIMPLEST** way  
possible to conserve

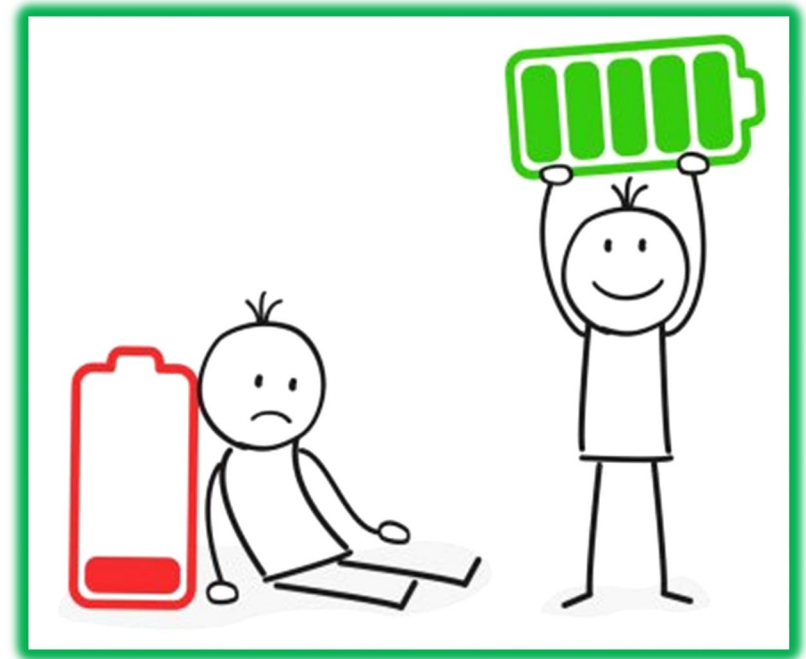


**TIME**  
and  
**ENERGY!**



# Principles of Energy Conservation

- Prioritize
- Plan
- Pace
- Position



## Prioritize your work

- The goal is to reduce the amount of work required and recognize your energy limits.
- Adapt the way you conduct your day-to-day activities, at work, rest and play
- Identify and eliminate unnecessary tasks
- Combine tasks as able
- Delegate tasks as needed to family members, friends or hired caregivers
- Use professional services for some tasks

## Plan ahead

- Planning your day or week saves time AND energy
- What time of day do you have the most energy?
- Utilize this time to be active.
- Space out your activities throughout the day.
- Do not schedule too many things to do in one day.
- Do the things that take more energy when you are feeling your best.
- Plan rest breaks after meals and throughout your day. Rest for 20-30 minutes after each meal.

## Pace yourself

- Complete the most important tasks first, and don't over-plan the day.
- Arrange tasks so that the more physical work is done when your energy level is highest.
- Pace yourself during the task and take rest breaks throughout the day when you feel fatigue
- Break a large job into smaller tasks
- Alternate light and heavy tasks
- Distribute heavy tasks over several days



## Position/Body Mechanics

- Sit down for your activities whenever possible. Keep a stool handy to allow you to sit down to perform tasks.
- Avoid tasks that require prolonged standing, squatting or stooping.
- Avoid raising your arms too high above shoulder level or bending over for too long.
- Keep your body straight while performing a task as poor posture consumes more energy.
- Avoid tiring and awkward posture that may impair breathing e.g. overhead reaching or bending over.
- Keep your arms close to your body while carrying objects and spread the load between both arms at the same time.
- Support your elbows or forearms on a firm surface while you work e.g. shaving, peeling vegetables.

**The goal of energy conservation is to improve your quality of life, by conserving your energy for the activities you “like to do” as well as those you “have to do”, within a safe and well structured environment.**



- Try to keep a Positive Mental Attitude (PMA) – Rather than focusing on what you can't do, try to concentrate on what you can do to maintain a high quality of life.
- Be creative in finding ways to adapt your activities so that you can continue to perform them.



# Personal Hygiene



- Sit down to undress, wash and dry.
- Use a long handled sponge to wash your back and feet.
- Make sure the bathroom is well ventilated – leave the bathroom door and window open.
- Avoid aerosols – use roll-ons or cream deodorant instead.
- Make use of electrical gadgets – toothbrushes and shavers.

## Dressing

- Sit down to dress/undress.
- Before starting gather all clothes together or have a dressing area.
- Depending on your routine; dress lower half first so clothing on your upper half doesn't restrict movement.
- Minimize bending by using long handled equipment or a foot stool.
- Consider the type of clothing – you may find slip on shoes and front fastening clothes easier to manage.
- Wear a warm scarf in winter to cover your mouth if weather becomes cold or windy.

## Cooking



- Sit down to prepare vegetables, wash dishes and mix ingredients.
- Cook large quantities that can be spooned into individual portions and frozen for use at a later date.
- Use ready meals to reduce meal preparation.
- Position items in easier to reach places and closer together to reduce bending and reaching.

## Housework

- Spread the cleaning out over a week – by doing a different room every day.
- Empty trash bins frequently, if possible, to avoid having to carry heavy bin bags.
- Let dishes soak to eliminate scrubbing.
- Let dishes drip dry.
- Ask family / friends to undertake heavier jobs e.g. vacuuming, cleaning windows.
- Consider having two sets of cleaning appliances/products, one for upstairs and one for downstairs to avoid having to carry them.