



Suggestions for Energy Conservation

200 American Road • Morris Plains, NJ 07950 • 800-287-0643 • Fax: 973-538-2703

Do you feel out of breath frequently throughout the day? Do you feel like you can't do all the activities that you used to be able to do? Energy conservation techniques can help you conserve your energy enabling you to participate in activities that were most meaningful. Energy conservation, a part of occupational therapy, can help!

Basic activities of daily living:

Bathing

- Sit to dry off
- Use long handles sponge or brush to reach feet and back
- Use a hand held shower while sitting to bathe
- Install a grab bar for safety
- Use safety strip or non-skid pad on the floor of the tub/shower
- Use a moderate temperature instead of hot water
- Use a terry cloth robe instead of drying off with a towel
- Use a shower chair or tub seat to sit while showering
- Wash hair in the shower, not while leaning over the sink

Grooming

- Sit to groom
- Use an elevated commode seat
- Rest elbows on counter or dressing table
- Don't lean forward unsupported
- Use a long handled comb or brush to avoid holding arms overhead

Dressing

- Loose fitting clothing allows for easier breathing
- Use a reacher and or dressing stick
- Wear front button shirts instead of pullovers
- Fasten bra in front and then turn it around to the back
- Use a long handled shoehorn and sock aid
- Wear slip on shoes
- Lay out clothes the night before
- Organize early to avoid the rush to dress
- Sit while bringing foot to knee when putting on socks to avoid leaning over

Mobility

- Wear low heeled shoes with a shock absorbent sole or insole
- Use a wheelchair for long trips

- Maintain good posture while driving
- Install ramps
- Install handrails
- Use cruise control when possible
- Place chairs strategically to allow for rest stops

Advanced activities of daily living:

Housekeeping

- Do small amounts of housekeeping each day
- Do whatever you can sitting
- Use a long handled dustpan
- Hire help
- Delegate heavy work to someone else
- Spread tasks out over the entire week

Shopping

- Make a list first
- Combine errands to reduce the number of trips
- Delegate shopping
- Shop at less busy times in the store to save time and energy waiting
- Use a grocery cart for support
- Organize a list by store aisles
- Use a power scooter if available at the store

Laundry

- Use a laundry cart that has wheels
- Use an automatic washer and dryer
- Sit to transfer clothes into the dryer if possible
- Wash bras and socks in a lingerie bag instead of wringing them out
- Sit to iron and adjust board height so you don't have to reach or strain
- Use a lightweight iron
- Wear clothes that do not need ironing

Meal Preparation

- Use small appliances (mixers, microwaves, toaster, oven, etc)
- Use mixes and pre-packaged food
- Use ergonomically designed utensils
- Rest elbows on table or counter
- Transport items on a rolling cart instead of lifting and carrying items to the table
- Use electric knife and can openers
- Use a dishwasher or let dishes air dry
- Let dishes soak instead of scrubbing
- Prepare double proportions and freeze extra for later in the week

- Sit while preparing food
- Use cookware that you can serve from
- Don't lift heavy containers off the stove, use a ladle for serving
- Use lightweight utensils
- Drag garbage bags instead of lifting

Childcare

- Plan activities around the table or place where you can sit
- Delegate childcare responsibilities if possible
- Teach small children to climb into your lap instead of picking them up
- Teach children to make a game of household chores (delegate tasks)

Always remember to take rest breaks whenever possible so that you can maintain your level of endurance and activity