

Fighting Fatigue: Ways to Save Energy and Build Back Endurance



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Objectives

1. The importance of pacing oneself and reserving energy for things that are most important.
2. Strategies one can use to conserve energy.
3. Adaptive equipment that can help with energy conservation.
4. Why exercise can improve stamina and strength.
5. Exercises recovering HCT and CAR T-cell therapy patients can perform at home to increase stamina and strength.
6. When it is appropriate to seek help from a physical or occupational therapist to help build stamina and strength.

What is Cancer-Related Fatigue?

Per the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, it is a "distressing persistent, subjective sense of physical, emotional, and/or cognitive tiredness or exhaustion related to cancer or cancer treatment that is not proportional to recent activity and interferes with usual functioning."

- Occurs in 70-100% of patients with cancer who undergo multiple different types of treatments
- Occurs in over 75% of patients who have metastatic disease

How Can We Manage Fatigue?

1. Find ways to reduce how much energy you spend
2. Use tools to save energy
3. Build back endurance with exercise

4 P's of Energy Conservation

1. Plan
2. Prioritize
3. Pace
4. Position

What is Planning?

Planning allows you to look ahead with intention to determine when tasks need to be completed to best fit your day/week.

Ways to Plan Ahead

Set your weekly calendar

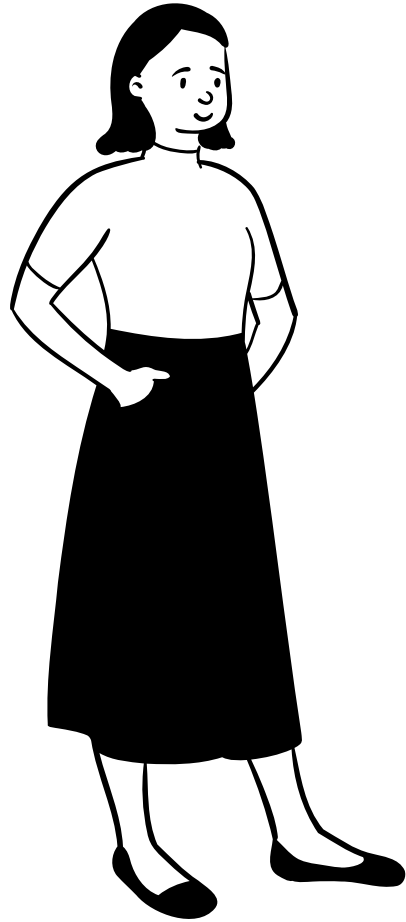
Create a chore routine

Meal Plan

What is Prioritizing?

- Knowing what needs to be done now and what can be put off for later
- This may change day-to-day!

How Can We Apply This? Let's Meet Sally



- 67-year-old white female
- Medical history:
 - Diffuse Large B-cell Lymphoma
 - Underwent an autologous stem cell transplant in February 2024

Sally's Likes and Dislikes

Sally's Likes	Sally's Dislikes
Gardening	Doctor's Appointments
Cooking	Dishes
Taking baths	Laundry

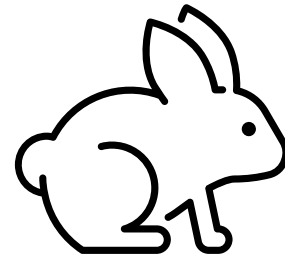
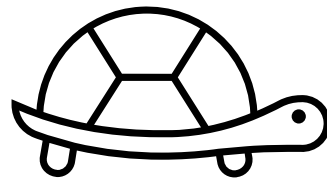
How Can Sally Prioritize Her Day?

Little Energy Needed	Moderate Activity needed	Large Amount of Energy Needed
Organizing pill box	Making dinner	Doctor's appointment
Paying her electric bill		Showering
		Laundry

What is Pacing?

How quickly you move through your activities

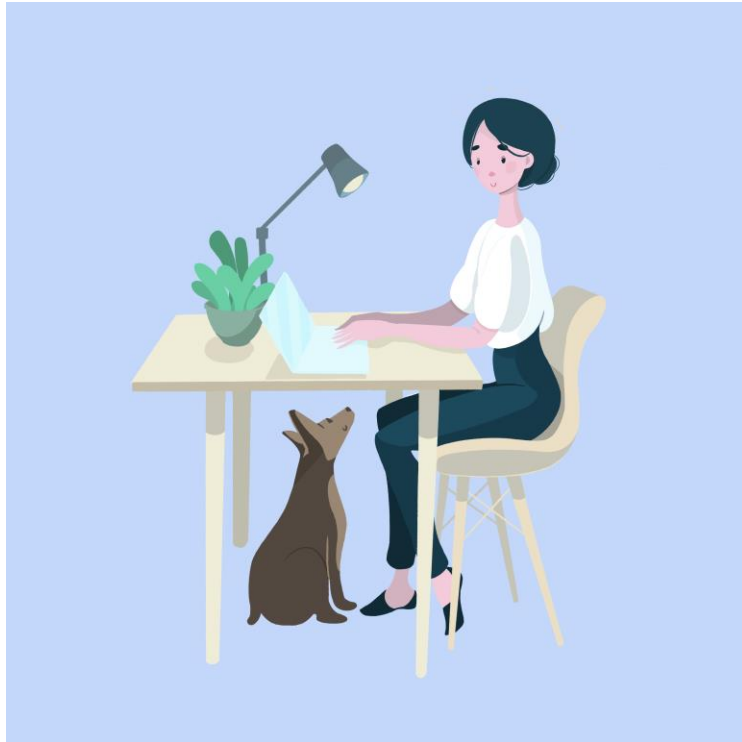
The **KEY**: Slow and steady, don't rush!



Ways to Pace Yourself

- Give yourself plenty of time to do something
- Build in short, frequent rest breaks
- Plan to rest before you feel tired

What is Positioning?



How you use your body to complete an activity

Lots of bending and reaching can cause fatigue!



Adaptive Tools and Equipment

Using tools can help to save energy when doing your daily activities by
changing your **POSITION**

Tools to Save Energy: Mobility Devices



Walker



Wheelchair



Cane

Work with physical therapy to find the right device for you

Tools to Save Energy: Bathroom Equipment



Grab bar



Shower Chair



Raised Toilet Seat



Hand-held
Showerhead

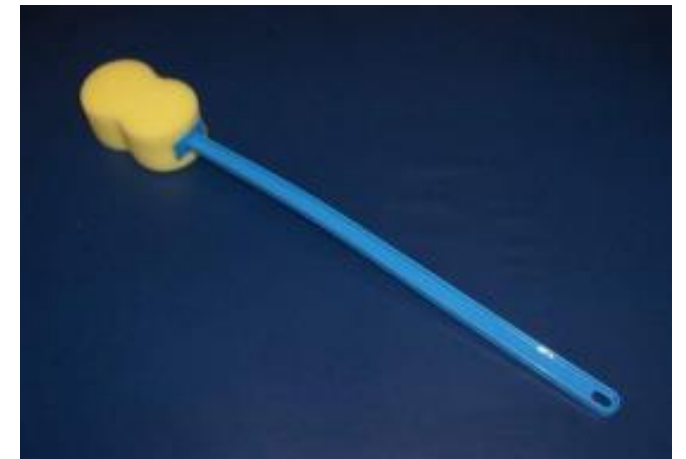
Tools to Save Energy: Daily Activities



Reacher



Sock Aid



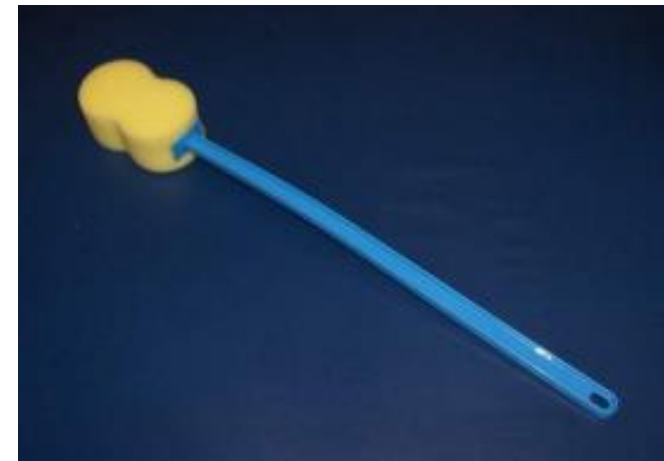
Long Handled
Sponge

Let's Go Back to Sally

How can Sally use tools to save energy and reduce her fatigue?

Sally's Likes	Sally Dislikes
Gardening	Doctor's Appointments
Cooking	Dishes
Taking baths	Laundry

Bathing



Cooking



Laundry



How Can We Treat Cancer-Related Fatigue?

EXERCISE!

Things To Consider Before Starting An Exercise Program

- Always talk to your doctor PRIOR to starting any exercise program
 - Low platelet numbers, anemia, etc.
- Location
 - Avoid uneven surfaces
 - Avoid peak sun exposure and temperatures outside
- Safety
 - Take someone with you
 - Always carry a phone

Start a Walking Program

- Benefits: increases your cardiovascular endurance
- Use the Rate of Perceived Exertion Scale (RPE) to grade your intensity
- Start with walking multiple short bouts with rest breaks in between

6	
7	Very, very light
8	
9	Very light
10	
11	Fairly light
12	
13	Somewhat hard
14	
15	Hard
16	
17	Very hard
18	
19	Very, very hard
20	

Use Strategies to Stick to Your Exercise Program

- Set short-term and long-term goals
- Use a calendar or fitness tracker to track your progress



Exercises You Can Start at Home

- What you will need
 - Sturdy chair with arm rests
 - NO wheels
 - Light weights or water bottles weighing 1-2 lbs
 - This is optional
- Start with 8-10 repetitions
 - 2-3 sets of each exercise



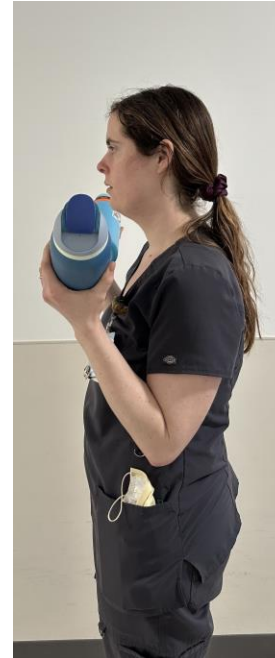
Arm Exercises



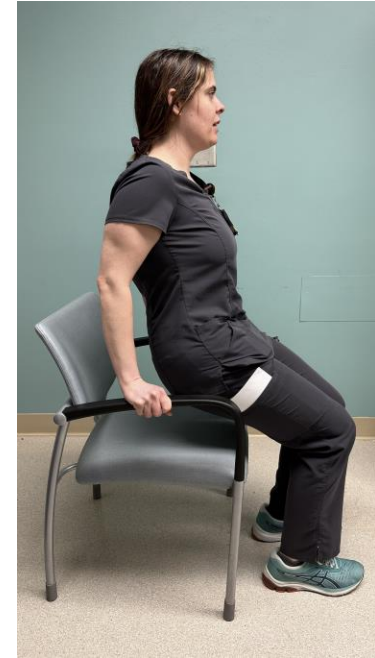
Front Raises



Lateral Raises



Bicep Curls



Chair Push Ups

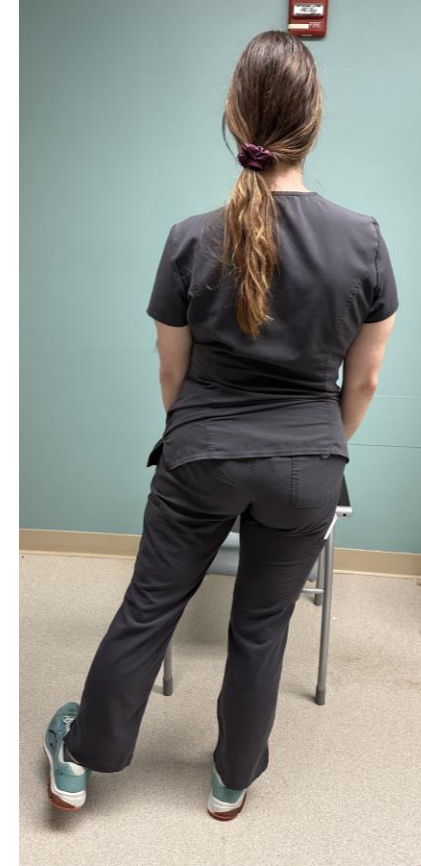
Leg Exercises



Marching



Heel Raises



Hip Abduction

Exercise Resources

- Outpatient Physical Therapy or Occupational Therapy
- LIVESTRONG at the YMCA
 - [ymca.org/what-we-do/healthy-living/fitness/livestrong](https://www.ymca.org/what-we-do/healthy-living/fitness/livestrong)
- BMT InfoNet Video Learning Library
 - [bmtinfonet.org/video/category/exercise](https://www.bmtinfonet.org/video/category/exercise)
 - [Thriving, Not Just Surviving, After Transplant through Exercise and Fatigue Management](#)
- Check with your local cancer centers to see if there are more resources

What's Next for Sally?



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Questions?



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