

Department of
Respiratory & Critical Care Medicine

Energy Conservation Strategies for Daily Activities



Energy Conservation Principles



- Schedule your plans for the day or week in advance



- Prioritise activities that you would like to do in a day and ask someone to help you with less important tasks



- Take frequent breaks when you are completing a task
- Remind yourself: DO – REST – DO



- Alternate between light and heavy activities so that you can have sufficient rest in between



- Break up a task into multiple steps
- Example: take a break after washing your upper body and before washing your legs



- Pace your breathing when you are completing a task
- Example: when climbing a staircase or showering

Tips When Doing an Activity



- Slow down when you are speaking, laughing, eating or coughing
- These actions can disrupt your regular breathing and cause shortness of breath/breathlessness



- Place commonly used items in easy-to-reach places
- Avoid bending down or reaching over your head to get items



- Avoid excessive and continuous forward bending movements, such as washing your legs in a standing position, as these movements can cause you to feel breathless



- Use a trolley when you are transporting heavy objects



- Perform your tasks in a sitting position whenever possible, to avoid standing up for long periods of time

Energy Conservation Strategies for Daily Activities

1. Dressing

- Consider wearing loose clothing that is easy to put on and take off
- Sit on a chair to wear your pants
- Use a long handled reacher or cross your legs to wear your pants



2. Showering

- Sit down to shower
- Use warm water to shower
- Shower when the weather is warm
- Use a long-handled sponge and cross your legs to wash your back and legs
- Ensure that your bathroom allows air to easily flow in and out (e.g. window is open)



3. Toileting

- Use a urinal (for males) or commode if you have difficulty getting to the toilet
- Pace your breathing when passing motion (defecating)



Commode

Energy Conservation Strategies for Daily Activities

4. Grocery Shopping

- Plan a shopping list so that you only buy what you need
- Use a shopping trolley to avoid hand-carrying your groceries
- Take a few breaks in between if the distance to the market/ shopping mall is long



5. Sweeping

- Use a dry wiper sheet or wireless vacuum cleaner instead of a broom
- Walk with the dry wiper sheet stick or wireless vacuum cleaner when cleaning the floor, and avoid only using your arms
- Take a break after cleaning each room



6. Mopping

- Use a spin mop (with a handle to drain the water) or a wet sheet to mop the floor
- Take a break after cleaning each room



Energy Conservation Strategies for Daily Activities

7. Hand Washing Clothes

- Sit down on a chair and hand wash your clothes in a sink



8. Getting Clothes Out of the Washing Machine

- Use a long handled reacher when retrieving your clothes from the washing machine
- Place your laundry basket on a stool to elevate its height
- Use proper breathing techniques and take a break when needed
(refer to point 12)



9. Hanging Clothes

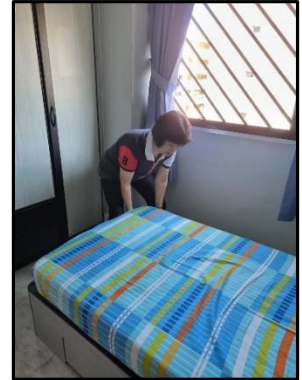
- Hang your clothes on window grilles or indoor drying racks
- Use proper breathing techniques and take a break when needed
(refer to point 12)



Energy Conservation Strategies for Daily Activities

10. Changing Bed Sheets

- Sleep on a mattress with a bedframe
- Place your bed away from the wall
- Use lightweight bed sheets
- Fold your bed sheet in on the side that you are standing on
- Use proper breathing techniques and take a break when needed
(refer to point 12)



11. Cooking

- Prepare ingredients while sitting down whenever possible (e.g. cutting or washing vegetables)
- Place a chair nearby to sit down and rest during cooking
- Consider making smaller portions of ingredients or dishes to avoid carrying heavy pots of food



12. Breathing Techniques

- Inhale when:
- Moving against gravity (e.g. lifting things from the floor)
 - Doing a pulling motion (e.g. mopping the floor)
 - Lifting your arms (e.g. putting things above your head)



Action Plan

Tips I will apply / goals I will set with my Occupational Therapist:

1)

2)

3)

Clinic 4A
TTSH Medical Centre, Level 4
Contact:
6357 7000 (Central Hotline)



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