

Focus on Planning

Why do we need to think about planning?

Planning is key in using the energy we have in the best way for us based on our priorities and having thought about pacing. Sometimes this is about making sure we have enough energy for the tasks that have to be done, and at other times it is making sure we have enough for the things we want to do. Thinking back to 'prioritising', it is really important that we can understand what activities are important to us as this makes us feel better about ourselves, our sense of control and accomplishment. Without planning we run the risk of using too much of our energy on certain activities, leaving us short of energy to either manage activities or do them as well as we plan to.

Hints, tips and useful information

- Choose the best time of day for each activity – play to your strengths and plan things at the times that are best for you when you can.
- Make a list or keep a diary.
- Use your understanding of pacing to plan activities.
- Think through each task – what are the basic activities involved? For example – will you be sitting, standing or walking – how will this affect your energy/ breathlessness/ pain.
- Plan ahead, organise tasks and distribute heavier activities throughout the week. Balance heavy activities (such as heavy shopping, gardening, hoovering) with light activities (such as dusting, light weeding, managing paperwork).
- Organise the timing of activities to avoid unnecessary trips, for example limit the need to go constantly up and down stairs.

Get practical

- Use the fatigue diary sheets to review whether you have different energy levels or pain through the day.
- 'Activities in my week' – think about the activities you have to do and would like to do in the coming week.

- 'Activities in my day' – look at the worksheet and plan the things you have to do and the things you would like to do. Try to score these so that you can see what are the really important things – try not to let these all be from the 'things I must do' – if they are, think about whether they must be done that day? If you are struggling, look back at the activities across the week and see if you can move things around.
- Use the activities in my day sheet to complete the day plan – you will need to put 'rest' into this.
- When you feel you have tried this for a few days, try completing the 'ideal vs actual day' – how are you doing? If there is a big difference, just remember to be kind to yourself – some people are natural planners and others less so!
- If you fancy, try setting a goal for the week.