


# Activity Basics

## Week 1 of 4



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## Agenda for Week 1

- Virtual Housekeeping
- Review of Explain Pain
- Self-monitoring
- Rest and Activity
- Stretches
- Approaches to Activity



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## Virtual Housekeeping

- Presentation slides
- Weekly handouts
- Using the chat box to ask questions
- Opportunities for group discussion
- Technical issues



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## Chronic Pain **EXPLAIN PAIN REVIEW**



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## Explain Pain

- We feel pain in the body, and the brain decides how much pain based on:
  - Sensory information from the body
  - Thoughts, emotions, memories
  - Awareness of the environment
- The degree of pain felt  $\neq$  amount of damage in the body
- The more often the alarm bell rings, the less stimulus needed before the brain perceives an activity or situation as dangerous and triggers pain



## Physical Self-Management Strategies

Self-management strategies facilitate improved posture and physical fitness, positive thoughts and emotions, and efficient interactions with the environment, which result in the brain giving a person less pain


- **Positioning in bed**
- **Neutral body mechanics**
- Heat/cold
- TENS
- Aerobic exercise
- **Strengthening and stretching exercise**
- **Pacing**
- **Increasing physical tolerances**
- **Ergonomics**
- Taking medication as prescribed
- **Flare-up planning**

# Self-Monitoring




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## Increasing Self-Awareness



- Insight is the KEY! Pain diary, lifestyle journaling, activity logs
- Helps identify factors that contribute to pain level
  - Factors within your control: i.e. Positive self-talk, duration/intensity of a task, using coping skills
  - Factors outside of your control: i.e. weather, family emergencies
- Helps you to notice your responses to situations
  - Automatic thoughts, holding your breath, uncontrolled worry, isolation



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## Take Back Control

- Awareness of the relationship between thoughts, emotions, activities and pain
- Testing new approaches to self management and getting things done
- Empowering yourself to improve functioning and reduce pain

## Self-Monitoring Log

- Choose 3 times each day to consistently note your pain and/or fatigue level (\_\_\_/10)
- Record your activities (and rest) throughout the day
  - Pay special attention to anything different/new (e.g. groceries, medical appt's, new coping skill)
- Make note of potential triggers (e.g. weather, family visiting from out of town, emergency situations)
- Record your overall mood for the day (\_\_\_/10)
- Comment on or rate your sleep from the night before (\_\_\_/10)



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## Injury, Pain & Rest

- Rest and Acute Injury
  - Typical response to pain is to stop the activity that causes pain
  - In new injuries a relatively short period of rest is appropriate
  
- Rest and Chronic Pain
  - When pain becomes chronic (past the normal time to heal), rest may decrease the pain, but the relief is only temporary
  - Too much rest can lead to the cycle of inactivity



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## Chronic Pain & Activity

- Research tells us that activity and exercise are helpful in the overall management of chronic pain and fatigue
- However, changing or increasing physical demands on the body can increase pain and fatigue
- Many people with chronic pain have been told to be active, but have never been instructed on how to start

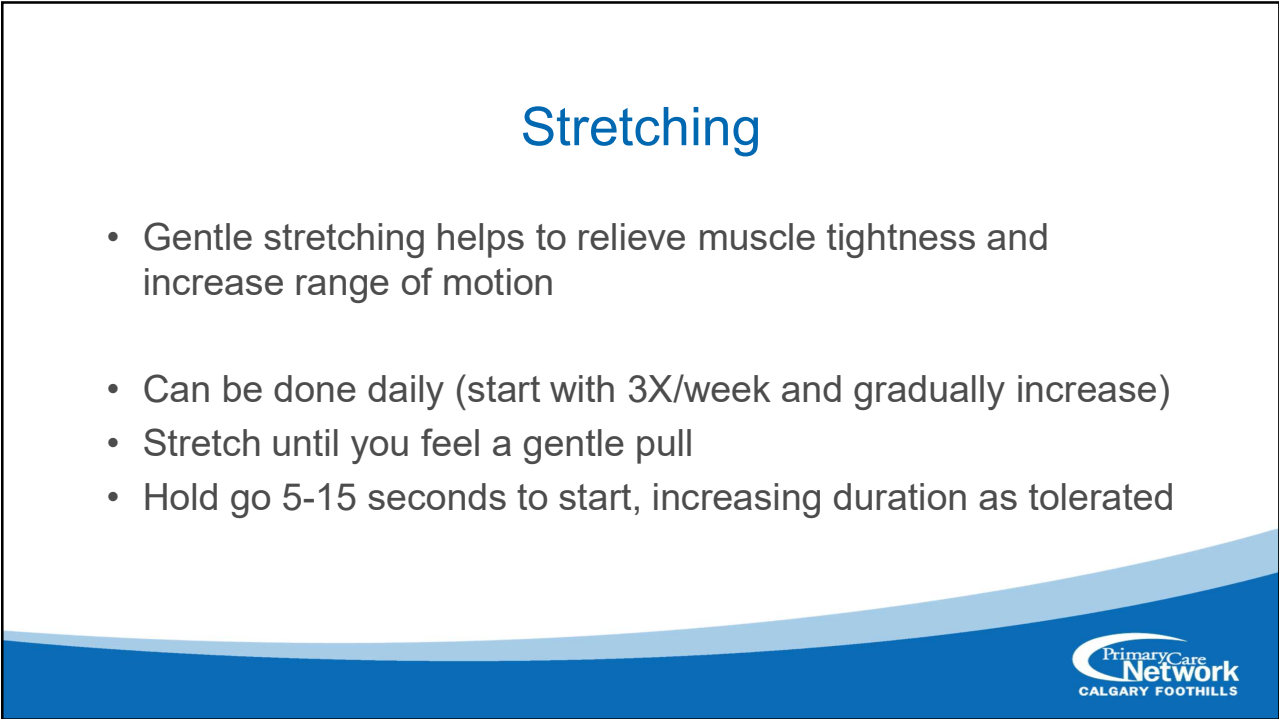
## Activity Tolerance

- How much of an activity a person can do before they experience a noticeable increase in pain or fatigue
- How much of an activity a person can do before they feel that if they continue they will experience a delayed increase in pain or fatigue





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## Hamstring Stretch



- Sitting with one leg extended, ankle flexed
- Lean forward at hip (keep neutral spine)

## Hip Stretch



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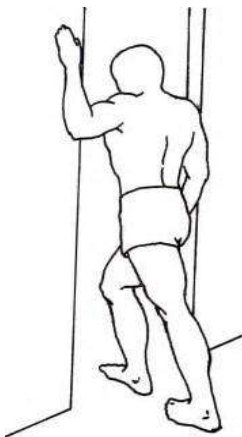
- Sitting position, cross one ankle across your knee
- Sit up tall
- To increase stretch, lean forward slightly at hips

## Back Stretch



- Sitting position
- Interlace fingers and reach forward
- Alternatively, sitting at a table rest your arms on the surface and reach forward

## Chest Stretch



- Rest forearm on wall
- Step forward keeping neutral spine



# Approaches to Activity



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## 'Do It No Matter What' Approach To Activity

- Do as much as possible despite the pain
- Stop only when the task is completed
- Push through the pain
- "This has to be done"  
"I've always done it this way"



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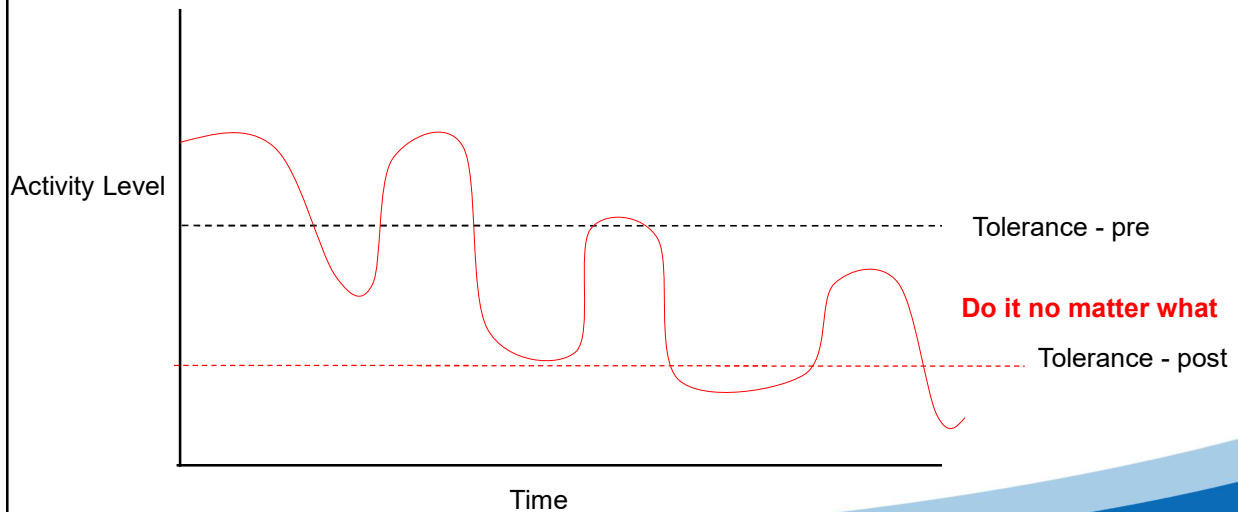
## 'Do It No Matter What' and Function

- Pushing through pain rarely leads to improved function
- Overdoing it on good days leads to higher levels of pain on bad days
- Over time there are fewer good days, more bad days, and overall function is lower



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## 'Do It No Matter What' and Activity Tolerance



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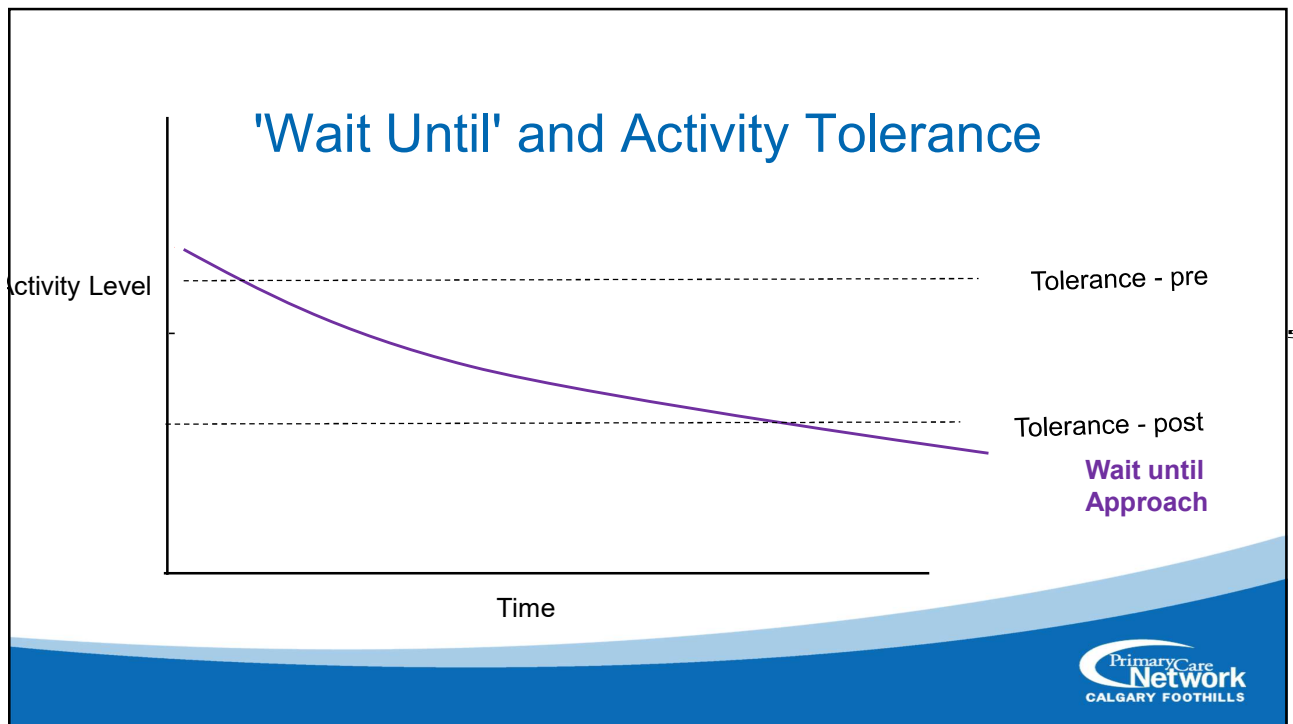
## The 'Wait Until' Approach to Activity

- Rest and wait until pain decreases before doing an activity
- Avoid activities that cause pain
- "If I do this, it's going to hurt!"

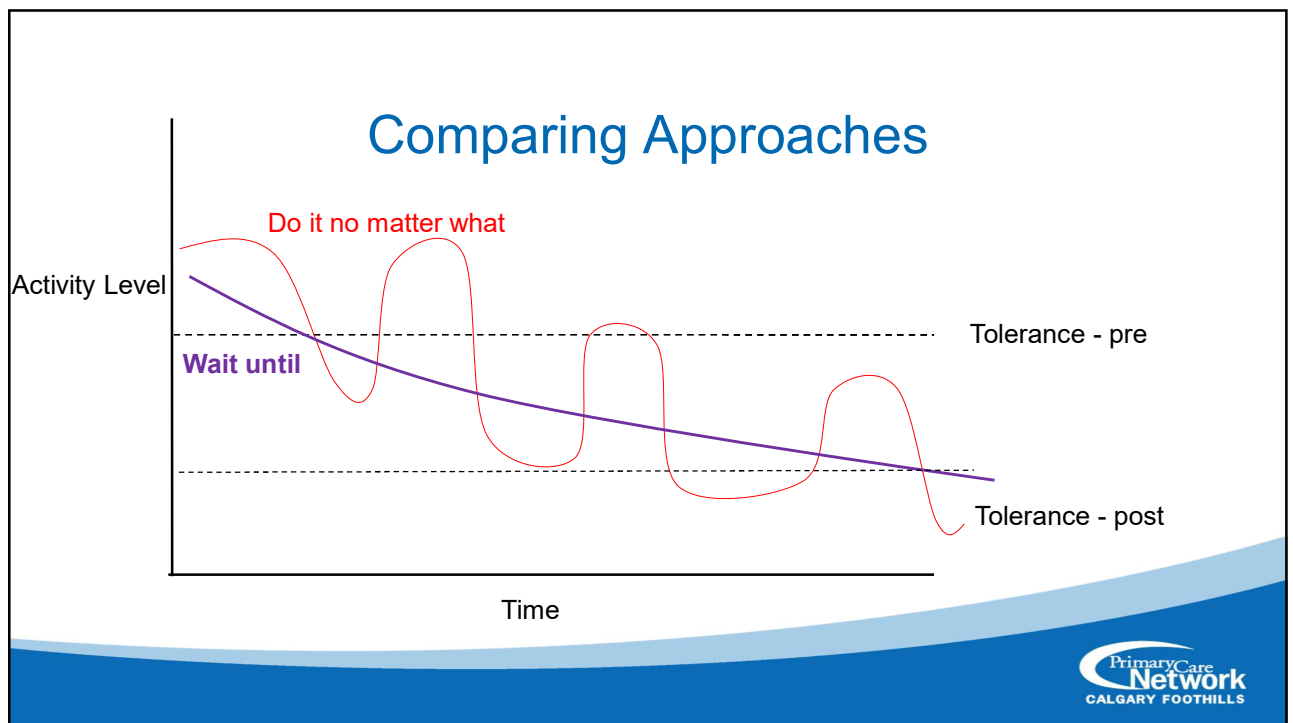


## 'Wait Until' and Function

- Overly cautious good days → decreased physical conditioning, therefore activity hurts more than before
- Higher levels of pain due to inactivity on bad days
- Over time there are fewer good days, more bad days, and overall functioning is lower



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## Combination Approach

- 'Wait until' approach towards non-essential or unpleasant activities
- 'Do it no matter' what approach towards essential or priority activities
- Inability to improve overall function and reduce pain on a consistent basis



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## An Alternative Approach: Pacing

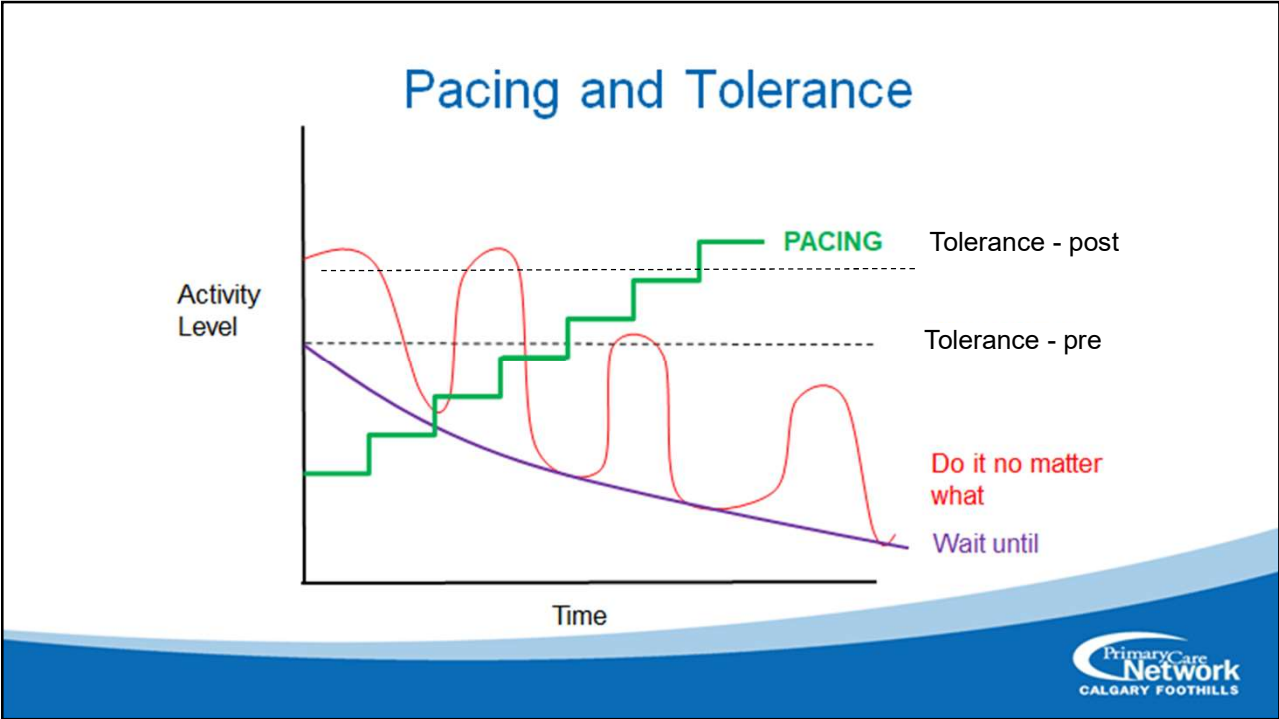


- Create a balance between activities including self care, productive and leisure activities
- Complete priority tasks more efficiently, without significant increases in pain or fatigue
- Schedule activities, rest and coping strategies to have a more equal output of energy from day to day
- Increase tolerances for specific activities over time



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## Group Discussion:

What is your typical activity approach now?

Have you tried the Pacing approach?

How might changing your approach be challenging?

How might Pacing help you manage your pain/fatigue?

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## Thoughts that Support Pacing

- "If I pace myself, I'll have energy to enjoy my family later."
- "I can start it now, and finish it this afternoon."
- "When others think of me they think about my personal qualities, not about how much I get done in a day."
- "I have prioritized my activities, so by sticking to my plan I'll be getting the most important things done."



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## Homework

- Self-monitoring
  - Pay attention to the relationship between your activities, mood, sleep and pain/fatigue
  - Notice how you approach your daily activities
- Exercises
  - Stretches



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