

Activity Basics

Week 4 of 4



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Agenda

- Homework review
- Ergonomics at home and at work
- Pacing
- Take Home Points



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Group Discussion: Homework Review

- Self-Monitoring
 - Neutral spine and posture
 - Monitoring body mechanics - challenges and successes?
- Activity Analysis exercise

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Ergonomics

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Neutral Spine and Body Mechanics Review



- Minimize twisting
- Minimize reaching
- Maximize strength
- Conserve energy

Goal: Reduce likelihood for excess strain or repetitive stress

Basic Ergonomics

- Ergonomics is the fit between the person and their physical environment when completing a task
- Awareness of our environment, or 'workspace' for any given activity
- Optimal ergonomics promote safe and efficient body mechanics

Task Setup

- Using hands directly in front of, and close to body
- Light weight activities requiring precision are best done between elbow and under arm level
- Light to medium weight activities are best done at approximately elbow level
- Heavy activities are best performed between elbow and hip level



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Group Discussion:

- How are you sitting right now?
- What is your workstation set up right now?
- Are you feeling any excess muscle strain or tension right now?



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Workstation Ergonomics

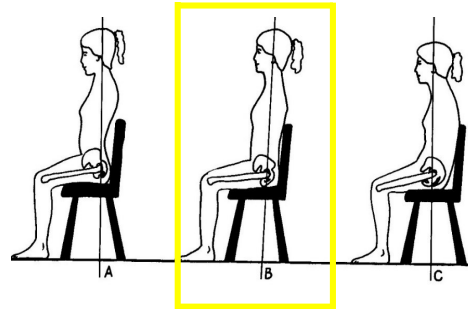
- When working at a desk or counter
 - Relax your shoulders
 - Keep your upper arms close to your torso, and elbows bent to approximately 90 degrees
 - Position your wrist in a straight line with your forearm and fingers
 - Objects that you reach for frequently need to be closest to your body
 - Adjust your chair height and use a foot stool if necessary to have your knees level with your hips

Workstation Ergonomics Continued

- Remember head posture
 - Position computer monitors or car mirrors so the chin can remain tucked and head neutral
 - Consider what part of your glasses you look out of, and pay attention to whether you are lifting your chin (e.g. you may need to lower a monitor if wearing bifocals)
 - Consider the distance required for visual acuity, and notice if you are poking your chin forward to see

Sitting Position

- Sit in a chair with your:
 - Knees approximately level with your hips
 - Feet flat on floor or stool, directly under your knees
 - Weight on bum cheeks (sit bones)
 - Spine 'tall'
 - Chin tucked
- Use a lumbar support to maintain the natural curve in your low back



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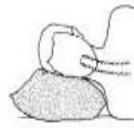
Correct Sitting Posture for Computer



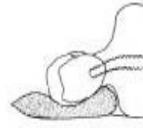
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Lying Position

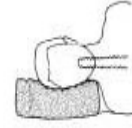
- Lying down
 - Thinner pillow under the head for back lying, thicker for side lying
 - Ears over shoulders over hips
 - Pillow lengthwise from knees to heels for back lying or between lower legs for side lying
 - Do not bend hips or elbows more than 90 degrees
 - Pillow in front of torso to support upper arm in side lying
 - Hands below shoulder level



pillow too high



pillow too low

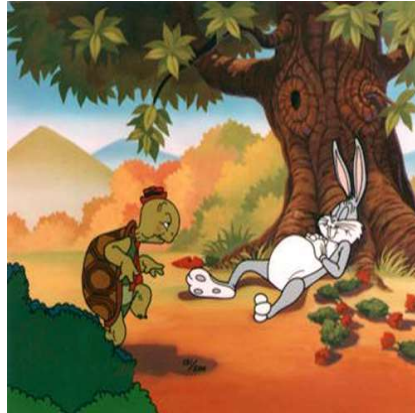


a good fit



Pacing

The Tortoise & The Hare



The Pacing Approach

“**Active self-management strategy** whereby individuals learn to **balance time spent on activity and rest** for the purpose of achieving **increased function** and participation in meaningful activities” (Jamieson-Lega, Berry & Brown, 2013, p.207)

Rest and Recovery

What is the purpose/intention?

Passive, unstructured

OR

Active, winding down of nervous system following activity



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How to Pace?

We've already discussed:

- Changing position (Posture, Positioning, Body Mechanics)
- Modifying the activity (Activity Analysis, Body Mechanics, Ergonomics)

We will now add:

- Incorporating self-care or leisure activities
- Alternating between activities
- Planning brief rest periods
- Mindset



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4 P's of Pacing

Positioning
Prioritizing
Planning
Perspective



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Positioning

(How are you going to do it?)

- Pay attention to having neutral spinal posture, good body mechanics and ergonomics during activities
- Alternate activities so that you are using different body parts
- Use assistive devices to decrease strain on your joints and muscles (e.g., long handled devices, foot on stool in standing position, grab bars, walking poles)



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Prioritizing

(What do you need to do?)

- Prioritizing activities
 - Things you have to do, are expected to do and want to do
 - Putting them in order of importance
 - Identifying any you can share or give away
- Recognize that thoughts and emotions demand energy too



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Planning

(When are you doing to do it?)

- Choosing a period of time you feel comfortable to plan ahead for
 - Today, a few days, a week
 - Create a flexible and balanced schedule to budget your energy output



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Planning

- How to Plan:
 - Use a calendar/daytime/organizer
 - Schedule the priority activities based on tolerances
 - Alternate more and less demanding activities
 - Schedule them so that no one day is more demanding than the next
 - Include rest and self-care throughout your day



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Perspective

(Why are you going to do it?)

- Remind yourself that by pacing you will get your most important tasks done within your tolerance levels
- Pacing is hard work, and it takes time to get it right
- Pacing becomes more automatic with time
- Having difficult/unwanted thoughts and feelings is normal



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What Happens on a Bad Day?

- On a bad day, you are still within your normal range of pain (you are not in a flare-up), so do what you have planned
- Remind yourself that you will take a break if your pain or fatigue increases by 1-2 points out of 10 or if you feel that continuing will result in a delayed increase in pain or fatigue
- Do not abandon the schedule entirely – remember, our bodies need to move – modify, ask for help with, or eliminate the most demanding tasks
- Schedule more breaks and coping strategies – use your self-management plan



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What Happens during a Flare-Up?

- Flare up plan is individualized to you
- May need to modify activities or schedule
- Regular use of self-management strategies
- Helpful to contact your health care provider for individualized support



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If I Feel Good, Can I Do More?

- Pacing your activities allows your body to adjust to a more consistent energy output, with fewer peaks and valleys in pain and energy
- On a good day, do not add a challenging activity, enjoy having less pain or more energy and only add low demanding, enjoyable tasks
- Then you will be more likely to have another good day tomorrow

Group Discussion: What stands out for you?

- Explain Pain
- Rest and Activity
- Self-monitoring
- Increasing Tolerances
- Posture
- Activity Analysis
- Body Mechanics
- Exercises: Stretching and Strengthening
- Ergonomics
- Pacing

Self-Management Plan

Please add any self-management strategies you have found helpful from class to your self-management toolbox



Next Steps

