

Activities of Daily Living, Work Simplification, and Energy Conservation



Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)

This is an umbrella term which is essentially talking about the normal activities you complete daily including:

- Bathing
- Dressing
- Toileting
- Cooking
- Feeding ourselves
- Cleaning
- Laundry
- Shopping
- Work
- Leisure activities



Each activity itself may not be too demanding but when stacked on top of each other as the day progresses this can become more of a physical and mental challenge. It is easy to become overwhelmed when we look at a busy day ahead and wonder how we are going to manage all that lies in store for us.



Energy Conservation and Work Simplification

- Energy conservation and work simplification are key techniques to success in managing ADL's.
- The principles are easy to follow and just require foresight and organization.
- As time goes on these patterns of behavior become habitual and require less thought and planning.

Goal

To make our day as easy as possible so we feel good and accomplish all the necessary tasks we have planned for the day.

Remember, Rome wasn't built in a day so over scheduling yourself or expecting too much of yourself is unnecessary.



Task Analysis

- Track activity to help identify patterns and routines.
- Avoid taxing your body's demands, you will learn what your endurance levels are.
- Balance your activities throughout the day, don't over schedule.
- Though it may be more efficient to shop and attend an appointment the same day, physically you may not be able to tolerate this much activity in a short period of time.



Energy Conservation

- Walk slowly and control breathing
- Sit for as many activities as possible
- Use slow, smooth, flowing motions
- Plan what you will do next
- Take frequent rests to prevent over fatigue
- Organize activities to complete in same manner – repetition makes you more proficient saving time and energy
- Exhale with strenuous part of activity
- Consider best time for each activity
- Don't carry items if you can put in or on cart
- Use shortcuts whenever feasible and eliminate unnecessary tasks

Coordination of Breathing with Daily Activities

Inhalation should be done when:

- Extending the trunk
- Lifting the arms up
- Whenever reaching away from the body

Examples:

- Reaching above your head to get clothes
- Removing/putting on pullover tops
- Reaching into high cabinet
- Hanging laundry to dry
- Cleaning windows

Remember:

Never hold your breath during activities

Pace yourself

Breathe normally when performing activities which require holding one position for an extended period of time (tying shoes)

Exhalation should be done when:

- Flexing the trunk
- Bringing arms into the body
- Whenever using any type of exertion
- Bending to pick something up from the floor
- Putting on socks and shoes
- Putting on pants
- Leaning over to make the bed
- Bending to reach in oven
- Loading a front washer
- Getting up from a lying or sitting position
- In stages of vacuuming or sweeping when the arms are pulled into the body

Bathing and Dressing

- Keep as many items in bathroom as possible and organize to keep within easy reach
- Avoid rushing
- Set up the night before
- Sit to perform tasks before, during or after – use a shower chair. Rest elbows on counter when shaving, brushing teeth
- Moderate temperature to reduce steam – open windows or doors, use fan
- Use oxygen in shower or bath if needed
- Avoid over exertion – take breaks, use adaptive equipment – long handle sponge and shoehorn, reacher, avoid bending at waist by crossing legs, avoid pullovers , wear loose clothes, hike pants once both legs in, gather items on floor while seated
- Avoid scented bath products
- Use electric toothbrush
- Consider short haircuts



Kitchen Activities

Organize kitchen drawers and cabinets

Before



After

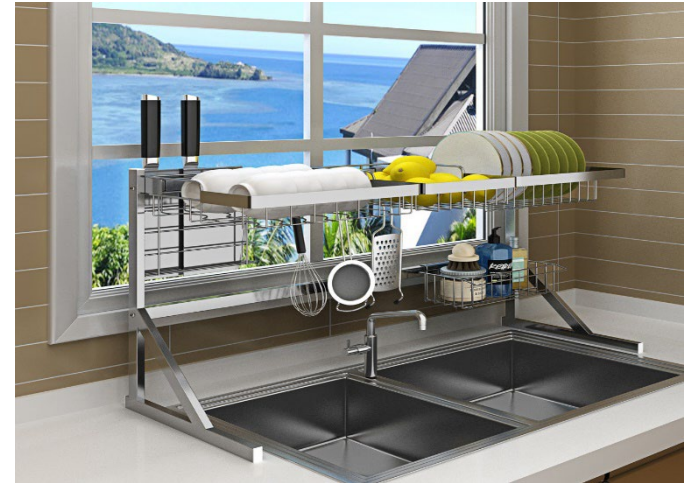


Kitchen Solutions

- Keep within easy reach and in same place
- Slide or roll things, don't lift – slide pots on counter
- Organize storage for easy access use dividers/bins/pull out shelves
- Most frequently used items in most convenient place – dishes, glasses
- Organize location of items to save steps and energy
- Use a ladder for higher items for reaching higher shelves – ask for help
- Prepare food for more than one meal – freeze, vacuum pack, can
- One pot meals for easy clean up
- Save labor with precut, dehydrated, frozen foods, mixes
- Make grocery list for week's supply of non-perishables and store

Kitchen Solutions

- Use electrical appliances for cutting, chopping, mixing, chopping, opening cans
- Cook food first and cut later – carrots, squash - use an egg slicer or mandolin
- Use Teflon pans for easy cleanup or soak dishes and pans immediately after use
- Place dishes in drying rack versus towel dry, add rack in sink to limit bending
- Sit on high back chair while working with feet on floor
- Store items at or near the center of where they are used – remember the kitchen work triangle - stove, sink, refrigerator – also consider main work area



Energy Savers

- Light weight newer tools for sweeping, mopping– Swiffer, Shark
- Use vacuum that requires minimal bending for attachments, light weight – no Kirby!
- Micro filter vacuums or use face mask to prevent particles from irritating you, open windows
- Pursed lip breathing while vacuuming, lawn mowing – rest, use your diaphragm with breathing
- Push rather than pull – use body weight, long easy strokes consumes less energy than short choppy ones – good body mechanics
- Use intercom or texting to manage steps/activity

Energy Savers 2/3

- Sit when possible proper seating that won't limit arm movement
- Shop at indoor malls where you can accomplish multiple tasks at once, sit, and manage weather
- Pace self – relaxed and steady pace is optimal
- Regulate activities to distribute tedious tasks throughout week and complete more difficult ones when you have more energy, alternate and interchange easy/heavy tasks
- Share tasks with family – assign responsibilities
- Consider your environment (terrain), weather, energy level and fatigue, rest before socializing, work in cooler area of house in heat

Energy Savers 3/3

- Arrange furniture for easy access
- Make bed starting at head and working down and around
- Use an electric blanket -lighter to lift and weighs less on body at night
- Buy wrinkle free clothes to minimize/avoid ironing
- Straighten rooms as you walk along
- Use fixed workstations so supplies available
- Multipurpose tools – unnecessary motions and clutter, ease of operation
- Let gravity work for you – laundry chutes

Home Safety Checklist

- Remove all throw rugs
- Keep frequently used items within easy reach
- If you have low or soft furniture , add a firm pillow to raise height
- Keep all walking areas clear of obstacles
- Wear rubber soled shoes to prevent slipping
- Use a shower chair if you feel unsteady on your feet while showering
- Install a handheld shower head for easier bathing, especially when using a shower seat and make cleaning easier
- Use a bathmat or nonskid strips for extra support in shower/tub
- Have at least one railing on stairway
- Use a night light for safety when getting up at night
- Use adaptive equipment as recommended or determined by needs – walker, cane, bath seat, raised toilet seat, sock aid, & grabber/reacher

Adaptive Equipment



Application for Walking Disability

- For Application for Walking Disability privileges got to the State of NH> Division of Motor Vehicles> Registration> Walking Disability Privileges ([Walking Disability Privileges, Application for \(RDMV 130\)](#)).
- The following link should pull up the application form:
- <https://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/dmv/forms/documents/rdmv130.pdf>