ENERGY CONSERVATION TECHNIQUES

Fatigue can interfere with your ability to function independently. However, energy conservation techniques can be easily incorporated into your daily routine. When you work more efficiently, you reduce the strain on your heart and cardiovascular system, minimizing fatigue, shortness of breath and stress related pain.

Energy conservation techniques include:

PRIORITIZING:
Decide between those activities that have to get done and those that can wait for another time.

PLANNING:
- Plan out your week so that you don’t end up doing all heavy tasks (such as laundry and cleaning) in one day.
- Plan to carry out the most strenuous activities during the time of day when you have the most energy.

MODIFYING YOUR ENVIRONMENT:
Arrange your environment so that you avoid excessive bending, carrying, and reaching.
- store items most often used in easy to reach areas (front of shelves, on the counter)
- use a lightweight cart or basket to transport objects around your home
- install a raised toilet seat or shower chair in your bathroom

SITTING DURING ACTIVITIES:
Sit while working as much as possible. Sit while you:
- take a shower (use a shower chair)
- fold laundry
- prepare meals (sit while you are chopping and peeling)
- dress yourself (pull up your underwear and pants as high as you can while seated. Then put on your socks and shoes. Then stand up once to pull to your waist.)
TAking rest breaks:
Rest breaks are very important. Learning when your body needs a break helps to save energy. When you feel tired or tense STOP and REST! Take frequent short breaks between activities rather than one long break at the end.

using labor saving tools:
- Use tools to help get the work done such as an electric can opener, a reacher to pick items off the floor, a long handled shower sponge, an electric shaver, the dishwasher, etc...
- Use tools that are easier to grip (large handles on combs and toothbrushes)

eliminating unnecessary steps:
- Decide what materials you will be needing during an activity so that you gather all of them before starting
- Use a terry cloth bathrobe to dry after a shower
- Use shoes with Velcro so you don’t have to tie shoelaces
- Prepare extra food portions for easy reheating
- Use paper plates and utensils
- Pin socks together before washing

using proper body mechanics:
- Sit and stand with good posture
- Lift with your legs, keeping your back straight
- Keep your nose and toes pointed in the same direction, do not twist your trunk
- Push . . . don’t pull
- Slide . . . don’t lift
- When need be, use both hands to carry items and hold them close to your body

These are just a few suggestions. You can add to these suggestions using your own problem solving skills and creativity, to work more efficiently and conserve your energy!