

# Living Better Together: Healthier at Home



**PLAN:** Set goals, alternate between hard and easy tasks.

**PACE YOURSELF:** Give yourself enough time to complete a task, and rest when you feel tired.

**PURSED LIP BREATHING:** Practice pursed lip breathing.

**POSITIONING:** Sit down for tasks and activities, keep arms close to your body when carrying items.

**POSITIVE ATTITUDE:** Think about what you CAN do instead of what you cannot.

**PLAN AHEAD:** Make a list of what you need to do for the day, get rid of extra steps for tasks.

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In this section of Living Better Together Project STRENGTH: Healthier at Home, you will find information on activities of daily living, how to save your energy, and breathing techniques. First, some definitions:

## **Activities of Daily Living (ADLs):**

These are the things you do to care for yourself. This includes eating, bathing, and dressing.

## **Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs):**

These are more involved activities like maintaining a home, preparing a meal, and managing medicines.

Many people living with COPD experience breathlessness and low energy levels, which may make ADLs and IADLs harder. Using less energy during your daily tasks means you can do more during your day.

The information contained in this packet is not intended as a substitute for medical advice.



# Save Energy in Daily Activities

Save your energy in activities of daily living helps to reduce breathlessness. This page has some tips on saving energy in common daily activities. When doing these activities, remember warning signs of a flare-up.

## Bathing, Showering, and Personal Care

Use a shower organizer to decrease reaching, sit down to bathe or dry off, use tools like long handled sponges, handheld shower heads, or electric toothbrushes.

## Meal Prepping and Eating

Sit down when preparing or cooking food, prepare double portions and freeze half, use appliances that take less effort to use, soak dishes instead of scrubbing, let dishes air dry or use a dishwasher.

## Shopping

Shop at less busy times, use shopping carts for support, organize your list by aisle for effective shopping, buy items to help you save energy like lightweight cookware, easy-on clothes, or easy to prepare food.

## Dressing

Lay out clothes before getting ready, sit down to dress, minimize leaning over (bring your foot up to put on socks and shoes), choose easy-on clothes with buttons, zippers, or slip ons. Don't forget to ask your caregiver for help if needed.

## Housework

Sit down when possible (ironing or folding clothes), use long handled mops or brooms, drag or slide objects instead of lifting, break up energy heavy tasks like vacuuming or mopping throughout the day, take breaks as needed.

Think about the activities you do daily and list each task from most important to least important. This allows you to plan out your day, and complete important tasks first and save least important tasks for later.

Daily Activities	Ways to Save Energy
Ex. Dressing, bathing, cooking, cleaning, etc.	Tips: Spread activities through the day, break up into easy tasks, use breathing techniques, sit while doing a task, avoid extra bending and reaching, take breaks when needed. Ask your caregiver to help with harder tasks.

# Breathing Techniques and Stretching

Breathlessness is a common symptom for people living with COPD because it takes more energy to breathe. However, there are certain techniques you can practice to reduce feeling short of breath.

## Pursed Lip Breathing




- 1 Inhale through your nose for two seconds.
- 2 Purse your lips like you are whistling or blowing out candles.
- 3 Breathe out slowly through your mouth and count to four.

## Diaphragmatic Breathing

- 1 Sit or lie down with your shoulders relaxed. Put a hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
- 2 Take a breath in through your nose for two seconds; you should feel your stomach move out.
- 3 Purse your lips and breathe out slowly through your mouth while you press lightly on your stomach. Repeat as you are able.

## Stretching

Stretching before and after exercise can help increase flexibility and improve the way your body moves.

Shoulder Rotation		Place hands on your shoulders. Slowly make forward and backward circles with your elbows.	Repeat five times each way.
Upper Chest Stretch		Stand in an open doorway. Raise each arm up, bent at 90-degree angles. Step forward with one foot. Feel the stretch across shoulders and chest.	Hold for 15-30 seconds.
Hamstring Stretch		Sit on the edge of a chair. Bend one leg and straighten the other with toes pointed up. Lean forward until you feel a stretch at the back of the thigh.	Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat two to three times.