

Pacing resources:

<https://www.massmecfs.org/long-covid-lessons-learned-from-me-cfs?start=4>

Pacing - Do your best to avoid “pushing through” fatigue.

“Pacing your activity, to the extent possible, is important to allow your body to recover and heal. Try not to do too much to the extent that it will cause you to get worse. Listen to what your body is telling you and take rest periods if you can after periods of activity. Make a choice about what is essential and what is not, and if possible, ask for help from those willing to take some of the burden off your shoulders. Be sure that an exercise program will not be beyond your energy tolerance and make you worse.

It is challenging to avoid going beyond one’s individual energy limit because it can vary from day to day.”

“The key to successful adjustment in ME/CFS and fibromyalgia is Pacing, which provides an alternative to the cycle of overdoing followed by forced rest (‘push and crash’.) By first understanding the limits imposed by illness and then adjusting to live within them, people can reduce symptoms, decrease the frequency and severity of relapses, and experience greater stability. Pacing also provides the foundation for gradual expansion of limits.” *Source: Bruce Campbell, The ME/CFS & Fibromyalgia Self-Help Program, cfssselfhelp.org.*

“Take one day at a time.”

<https://www.massmecfs.org/more-resources-for-me-cfs/106-mecfs-self-care-the-basics>

From Howard Bloom – Self-Care: The Basics

“Think again in terms of having an energy bank account with very small balance. You must become aware of every *penny* of energy you expend during the day. You have no passbook, so you must determine your balance through continuous self-assessment to ensure you do not overdraw your account. *Do not challenge your limits by trying to be your "old" self.*

*This temptation hits every CFS/CFIDS/ME victim, but it can carry you to new depths of illness, crushing you with even more severe limitations and surrealistic symptoms than you ever imagined possible. If you are going to get better—and

many people do—it will be through skillful self-management, not through challenging your capabilities.

*If you are a take-charge, formerly high-achieving person, your new goal is an achievement of a different kind—to rein yourself in; to gain a gentle self-discipline over your cravings for your former level of activity.”

<https://www.massmecfs.org/living-with-fibromyalgia?start=6>

“Resting and pacing are the two most vital parts of adjusting one's lifestyle

Rest is necessary for energy conservation and a return to neutrality or "slow idle" before going to another task. When setting up a schedule, rest periods are just as important as work periods.

Pacing is maintaining activities at even keel, usually at a much lower pace than healthy individuals, and breaking up the day into multiple work, rest and play segments.

Switching between tasks will help to give certain muscles and body postures a break.

Learn to prioritize and decide what is most important for today, next week, what can be delegated to someone else, and/or which things may have to be left undone.

If something important is coming up, then conserve your energy for that.

Try to stay prepared for unexpected circumstances by having some extra supplies, batteries, medicines, bottled water, and food on hand in the event that you are unable to leave the house due to a flare-up of your condition, bad weather, or car problems.

In short—be flexible and try to stay within your "energy envelope."

<https://www.massmecfs.org/approaches-to-treatment/lifestyle-management>

“Coping with a significant change in life, like chronic illness, requires that a person come to terms with his/her situation, focus on what s/he can still do and make sensible changes, such as:

- Educating oneself about Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) or Fibromyalgia (FM) in order to get a reasonably good understanding of how the illness manifests and how it is generally managed.
- Establishing a new sense of "normal" for yourself by trying to recognize early signs of when you are starting to surpass your limit and determining when you tend to feel or function your best. Don't overdo even when having a good day. Always plan rest breaks.
- Pacing activities by alternating tasks/chores and breaking them down into smaller, more manageable steps and resting in between. Prioritize and determine what can wait. Try to schedule things (if at all possible) when you function best and add a little extra time to avoid rushing or unforeseen delays or problems along the way.
- Creating a safe, quiet space for yourself where you can clear your mind and rest.”

<https://www.massmecfs.org/living-with-fibromyalgia?start=5>

“Reduce stress—organize your day so that you can be in control of your time and activities, allow a "cushion" of extra time to minimize rushing. Evaluate if a particular situation warrants the kind of reaction or attention that you're giving it.”

<https://www.massmecfs.org/more-resources-for-me-cfs/73-recovering-from-cfids>

“With this illness one has to find a way to accept where one is, rather than digging yourself deeper into the hole, pushing yourself beyond where you're able to be now—because you can only be where you are. Once you accept where you are, then you can find out what you can do within those limits.

You can't have control what you can't have control over; you can have control over what you can do within the limits you're given. And I think, given my own experience, that by living this way, you're able to expand your limits—you're able to gradually get control over more things as the limits expand.

But you can't expand those limits if you're constantly overreaching them. So there is a lot to be said about accepting where you are and then setting priorities within those limits.

So you need to do things you know are essential and can be done based on your limits. By saying: this is what I have to do, this I can do, and the rest I have to let go because I can't do it—then I think the limits gradually expand.

You do gain more control. One thing I've learned from this illness (or so it seems) is: before I had the illness, my mind, in many ways, was dictating to my body or emotions. Finally, somehow, my body broke down. Now my body was saying: "I'm taking over." So the body has to be given its due. The mind, somehow, has to accept this and give in to the body's basic needs; then gradually recovery can begin.

This is not to say that acceptance means becoming an invalid. Don't give up. Keep up as much of your life as possible, but within the limits that keep you from getting worse. Keep up hope, that over the long-run you will get better. (Make a distinction between your limits today and this week, and the long-run when you will be better.)

I've learned through painful experience that it's better to miss one activity today than six in the next 2 or 3 days. I've learned to be conservative on curtailing activity if I'm starting to get exhausted, because too many times I've ignored my body cues, pushed myself, done the one extra thing and then been in bed for 2 or 3 days. Better to say: I'm going to go home now and take a rest and be sure I can do what I've got planned for tomorrow. This is a trial and error process that I believe many ME/CFS patients have gone through.”

See also Dr. Bruce Campbell's website for pacing articles
<http://cfselfhelp.org/library/inside-self-help-class>