

- Make maximum use of all space, cupboards and drawers. Use pegboard, hooks, pullout shelves, magni-grip, lazy susans, vertical filing, revolving shelves, pullout bins and racks to keep equipment organized and in easy reach.

### **7. Use both hands to work**

- Use both hands at once with long, flowing motion in a curved path e.g. *dusting, washing windows.*
- Use clamps or suction cups to rest and hold objects to allow both hands to be free to work.

### **8. Let gravity do the work**

For example, throw clothes for the laundry in a chute, or down the stairs

### **9. Use the easiest method**

- Don't lift and carry when you can slide an object
  - e.g. - *pots from sink to stove top*
  - *tip to pour a tea kettle rather than lift to pour*
  - *use wheeled trolley to transport tools to car or machinery for repairs*
  - *use a bundle buggy to transport clean and soiled laundry and bedding*

# **conserving your energy and simplifying your work**

**4. Reduce the amount of unnecessary bending and stooping you must do**

- Use long-handled sponge-tipped brushes to clean the bath tub (purchase in hardware stores).
- Use long-handled dust pans, floor mops.
- Use boot/shoe grip to remove shoes and long-handled shoe horn to put shoes on.
- Place pillows, bedding, tool kits on chair to avoid bending to pick up from the floor.

**5. Use light-weight, easy to operate equipment**

- aluminum pots and pans
- stack only those things of the same size and shape to promote organization
- automatic defroster
- automatic garage door opener
- pull out shelves for pots and pans
- easy to open and close doors, cabinets

**6. Use work centre**

- Store all needed working equipment for a particular job in one area. This avoids unnecessary walking, carrying, bending and reaching. For example, in a baking centre, you would store the non-perishable ingredients for baking together with your rolling pin, measuring cups, mixing bowls, baking pans, etc.
- Store your most used items in drawers or shelves that are between waist and shoulder level, so you won't have to stoop or stretch to reach them. Put equipment you don't use often on less accessible shelves.

- delegate chores to family members or hire people to do heavy chores, e.g. - *taking out the garbage*
  - *washing windows*
  - *raking leaves*
  - *mowing lawn, gardening*
  - *household maintenance*

## **2. Make one task out of two or more tasks**

- If in a two-storey home, collect items at the stair well and make one trip instead of several.
- Have one broom/vacuum/supply of cleaners upstairs and one downstairs.
- Prepare food for 2 meals when cooking and freeze the other meal for later.
- Use a grass catcher or riding lawn mower to eliminate raking of cuttings.
- Rather than using serving dishes, cook and serve in the same utensils/dishes or cook one-dish meals.
- Complete bedmaking on one side and then go to the other side.

## **3. Avoid carrying and lifting**

- slide or roll heavy objects when possible
- slide pots on counters
- use a wheeled table, trolley, bundle buggy, tea table to save many steps and decrease amount of lifting and carrying  
e.g. - *setting the table, moving laundry*

## **What is Energy Conservation?**

Energy conservation is a way to avoid fatigue by using common sense. It means finding the easiest way of doing your work and a good balance between rest and work. This balance will leave you with extra energy that can be used for things you enjoy doing.

Energy conservation techniques will allow your heart to heal by preventing overwork and over-fatigue. After the heart has taken time to heal, these same techniques are useful to avoid angina by preventing overwork and over-fatigue.

## **How do you Save Energy?**

1. By  **pacing**  your activities.
2. By  **planning**  your time.
3. By setting your  **priorities** .
4. By using  **good posture**  at all times.
5. By learning to  **relax** .
6. By becoming  **efficient**  (organization and use of the best method).

### **I. Pacing**

Your goal is to keep a balance between rest and activity every day. Rest doesn't mean that you must lie down in bed. You can sit and rest with your feet up for 20-30 minutes at least twice a day (once in the morning and once in the afternoon). Combine activity with rest.

If you become tired, no matter what you are doing, stop the activity and rest. Don't push yourself when your heart is telling you it needs a rest.

A rest period of about one hour should be taken after meals. Resting will give the heart more energy to pump the extra blood to the stomach needed for digestion.

Try to sleep the number of hours that you usually slept before your heart attack or heart condition every night. Try to sleep 6-8 hours a night. Do not stay up very late one night and try to catch up the next. If you must plan a late night take a nap beforehand.

You want to be able to foresee fatigue and rest before you are tired. In other words, quit while you are ahead. This means learning your work tolerance level and carrying out activities within your limits. Learn to recognize how much you can do before developing angina and stop before reaching that point.

Watch for the following signs which mean that you have gone beyond your activity tolerance and report these symptoms to your doctor.

- shortness of breath
- anginal discomfort during or following an activity
- excessive fatigue during or following an activity
- palpitations during or following an activity

You will be able to do more if you break activities into small units of work and rest. Therefore, when an activity such as washing the car is allowed in your activity schedule, it can be paced by washing half of the car, resting, and then completing the rest of the car. Perhaps rests between stages is needed, i.e. washing, rinsing, waxing. The important thing is to **stop** when you begin to feel tired.

Not only should you pace your activities but you should also pace the rate at which you do them. Haste is a common fault. It is based on a drive to get things done or on a lack of good planning. Poor planning results in not enough time, or too many jobs. Therefore, to avoid last minute rushes allow plenty of time for activities and plan your day so you can get everything done without getting tense or hurried.

Because rushing will increase the chance of discomfort - use slow, smooth and flowing movements while working.

## 5. Learn to Relax

Emotional stress and tension cause the body to produce adrenaline. This hormone makes the heart pump faster and harder and causes blood vessels to clamp down or become narrower as with smoking. In addition, tension may create high blood cholesterol levels during the stressful period.

Because stress and tension have such a straining effect on the heart we must find methods to reduce these factors.

1. Be aware of what makes you uptight.
  - traffic, family relationships, business, noise, supervisors/co-workers, certain friends, yapping dogs
2. Make choices and changes that allow you to avoid many of these situations.
3. Learn relaxation or exercise techniques. Be sure to plan two rest periods in your day. Don't feel guilty or lazy that you are taking a rest.
4. Identify some exercise appropriate to your level of wellness and use it to burn up extra adrenaline and produce relaxation. Exercise also gives you time to yourself.

## 6. Efficiency

This phase includes being organized and using the easiest method, or what is called "*simplifying work*", to get your work done.

### 1. **Eliminate anything that doesn't have to be done**

- stacking pots and pans - hang on hooks
- let dishes air dry
- choose permanent - press clothing that doesn't need ironing

or stand with the elbows close to the body and have your work just below the point of the elbow.

Working with your arms above your shoulders is harder on your heart than working them below shoulder level. Avoid holding your arms or working with your arms above shoulder level, such as in window washing or painting a room.

Proper work heights provide comfortable use of arms. Have someone rearrange cabinets and closets so that things you use often are at waist level. If you must have things in higher cabinets, place those articles used most in the front or use a foot stool. Keep a stool in the kitchen and workshop areas to achieve needed height to avoid reaching and holding with raised arms. Adaptations in the home can also be helpful. Cabinet door handles should be placed high on the lower cabinets and low on upper cabinets.

## 2. Sit to Work

All activities are 25% easier when done sitting rather than standing. Examples of work done sitting are: *hammering, sawing, ironing, gardening, loading/unloading dishwasher, mowing the grass standing, washing dishes, meal preparation and bathing, showering with bath seat*. Work surfaces and height adapters vary. The kitchen table is useful for many activities. A wheeled trolley pulled over the knees, a pull-out lap board to build into a work bench or kitchen cupboards, and an adjustable ironing board with a plastic cover are all useful. A chair with adjustable heights, a foot rest, a firm wide seat for support, and a good back support such as a typist's chair, can adapt to work heights when seated at work and provide comfort.

The suggestion of sitting to work is often met with objections. "*I was always taught that it was a lazy way to work*" or "*I cannot work as well sitting down*". This first objection is not acceptable and the second can be prevented by working at the right height and by having things within reach. It may feel awkward at first but after a while it will become natural.

## 2. Planning

After you have thought about your activities and the best way to pace them, let's see how they will fit into your days.

To allow your heart to rest and prevent fatigue and overwork, space your activities. Plan your days and weeks work so that you avoid doing everything all one day. Plan so that tasks are spread over the day; do some in the morning, afternoon and evening. Do heavier activities in the morning when you are well rested and alternate heavy and light tasks. Don't forget to rest in between tasks. Avoid trying to do several tasks on a day when you are feeling especially good.

A weekly schedule is the most practical way to plan and organize. Begin by listing all the activities you think need doing in the following manner:

Daily Tasks	Weekly Tasks	Monthly Tasks
bed making	laundry	trim hedges
tidy up	cut the lawn	poker game
exercise	take out garbage	wash car
wash dishes	banking	wash windows
walking	business meetings	
read paper	grocery shopping	
household repair	shovel snow	
project		

Next, look at list carefully and remove any tasks that are unnecessary or ask others to do those tasks.

### **Trim hedges**

Means prolonged holding of arms above the heart. Delegate a family member or hire someone to do this job.

### **Shovel snow**

Means lifting of weight above the heart, pushing against resistance. Hire someone to do this job, or delegate to a family member.

### **Car wash**

Take your car to a car wash.

### **Stressful business**

Arrange meetings to be held on a day which will not likely be busy. Schedule time before and after the meeting for relaxation and rest.

### **Dishes**

Air dry.

When you are left with a list of only essential tasks to be done, organize them into a weekly schedule. Keep in mind these points:

1. Allow rest periods throughout the day.
2. Be prepared to take a rest when needed, even in the middle of a task.
3. When allowed to resume strenuous tasks such as mowing the lawn, break up the task into smaller units of work, i.e. front lawn Monday, back lawn Tuesday.
4. Alternate heavy and light jobs.
5. Avoid prolonged standing, lifting and holding. Sit to work whenever possible, as sitting uses less energy than standing.

Plan to avoid situations, people, and topics of conversation which upset you, make you tense or angry. Your heart works much harder when you are tense or angry. The first step and the hardest is identifying these situations and stress producers in your life.

Try to plan your day to avoid being in very cold or very hot temperatures. Avoid working in the coldest or hottest part of the day. In the summertime, plan your outdoor activity during the cool part of the day, as the heat makes the heart work faster. On a very cold windy day the heart must work harder to keep the body temperature constant; therefore, avoid chilling, cover your mouth and nose with a handkerchief or scarf to retain heat, and don't take breaths of cold air.

## **3. Priorities**

To plan your time you must set your priorities. This means looking at your activities for the day and putting them in order of importance. Be sure to include time for daily exercise, rest and leisure time such as your hobbies and favorite pastimes. For example: *If you plan Bridge every Tuesday night, you might plan easy, light, non-stressful tasks for the day time, or plan to work in the morning and leave the afternoon for rest and relaxation. This planning will allow you to join your bridge club refreshed and not cause you to be exhausted by the end of the evening.*

## **4. Posture**

The position of your body will affect how quickly you tire. Good posture is not simply a matter of standing tall. It means correct use of your body at all times. Good posture allows muscles to work within their best range and takes the least amount of energy to maintain that position. Avoiding strain should become a way of life practiced while lying, standing, walking, working and exercising.

### **1. Use Proper Work Heights**

In order to maintain good posture while working, you also need to use the proper working height. The best work height allows you to sit