

Worksheet 7.1  
Pacing activity / exercise

The aim of pacing exercise is to achieve a level that is sustainable every day without causing a flare up of symptoms. This may mean that you will start out at a lower level than you have previously tried. The temptation is to continue beyond your set plan if it's a good day – **do not give in to temptation**. The payback (i.e. worsened symptoms) will mean a day or two of resting. This pattern can lead to deconditioning, and is a major cause of decreased activity levels over time.

The aim is for you to **succeed** so start slow and low and build up gradually. Generally you can increase your time/distance every 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> day, but sometimes you will stick at a certain level for longer. You will find your own level by experimenting.

Example of pacing up

<b>Chosen activity / exercise</b>	Walking
<b>Current tolerance</b>	10 minutes on flat
<b>Plan</b>	Walk for 10 minutes on flat every day for 3 – 4 days
<b>Progress (if no increase in symptoms)</b>	Increase walk to 12 – 14 minutes
<b>Progress</b>	Try walking on slight slope – 10 minutes
<b>Progress</b>	Increase walking including slope
<b>Progress</b>	To increase stamina try second shorter walk each day

Walking in the above example could include the use of walking aids (sticks / crutches) or sitting on benches every few metres. Speed of walking is up to you, but needs to be sustainable. You can work out your own “steps” in the ‘Pacing Exercise’ worksheet.

You may find that you can only add a new activity once a week to start with. That's ok, but rather than trying to then increase the time or distance, try to stay at an easy level, and increase the frequency of the activity every 2-3 weeks, e.g. you may manage a ten minute walk once a week. Try this for 2 weeks, then increase to twice a week, then work up to 3-4 times a week, before you start to increase how far you walk, or how long you walk for.

For some bigger activities i.e. swimming, dancing, bowling etc, it's ok to do these once a week, as long as that doesn't reduce your ability to do a lower level of activity e.g. walking, for the rest of the week.

**Worksheet 7.1**

**Pacing activity / exercise**

Have a go at creating an activity / exercise plan that is based on pacing. Make a note of the activity you have chosen Next to “current tolerance” make a note of how much of that activity you are currently able to perform. Next to “plan” make a note of how you intend to increase this. If you are able to perform the activity consistently for a few weeks you can then make a new plan next to “progress”. Use the worked example from earlier to help you with this.

<b>Activity</b>	
<b>Current tolerance</b>	
<b>Plan</b>	
<b>Progress (if no increase in symptoms)</b>	
<b>Progress</b>	
<b>Progress</b>	
<b>Progress</b>	
<b>Progress</b>	