

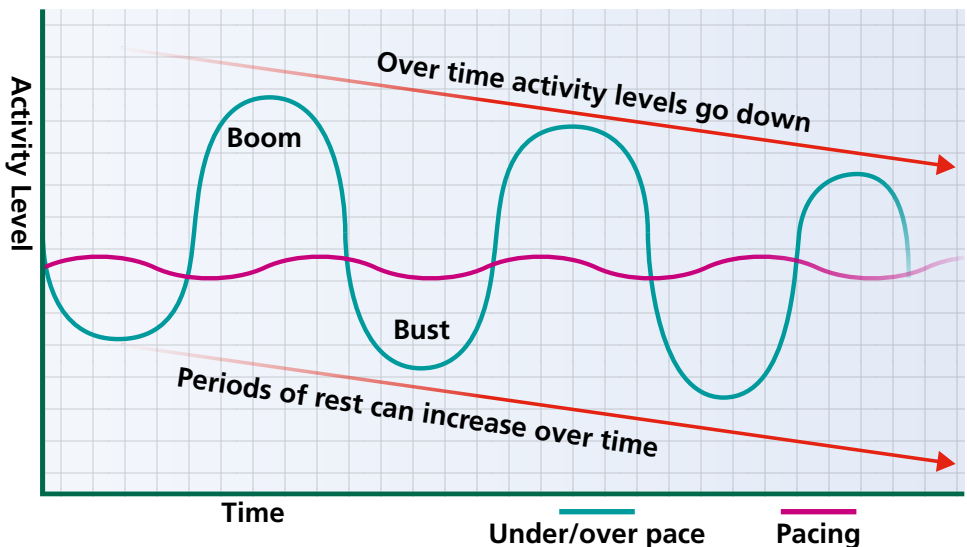
Pacing and How to Pace

What is pacing?

Pacing means to spread out the activities that you do more evenly over days.

Pacing can help you do more in your life. Pacing can be hard to start with but can help to increase your activity levels in the long run.

Pain can restrict how much you can do. It can feel good to push through on a good day, but it can lead to more pain afterwards. Over time, this can reduce what you can do.



When you know you have good and bad days with your symptoms, it's tempting to do a lot of activities on the good days.

This can worsen symptoms on the bad days and therefore you are likely to avoid activity. It is not good to push yourself until pain or tiredness makes you stop.

It can then take your body longer to recover as well as making your body work harder to recover.

This longer period of recovery can lead to muscles getting weaker and the joints getting stiffer which can over time make further activity even more difficult. It is better to do a set amount regularly that is manageable and then build this up over time. This will also make it easier to plan your days.



How to pace?

You can pace by hour or across the day or week.

Think about activities or stages of activities and split completing and rest.

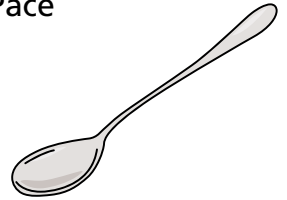
Think about adapting, changing or breaking down tasks.

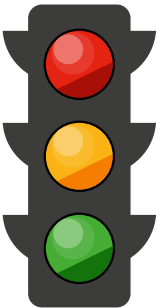
Tips on how to pace:

- Plan
- Prioritise
- Pace

Spoon Theory: How to use and save energy

- Imagine each day starts with 12 spoons
- One task uses one spoon of energy
- Think of the tasks you need to complete, is there anything you want to complete that day
- Prioritise each day



Traffic light system 1		Traffic light system 2
Red: What can wait more than half a week?		Red: What uses the most energy?
Amber: What can wait a few days?		Amber: What uses medium energy?
Green: What needs doing now?		Green: What doesn't use a lot of energy?

It can help to ask yourself these ABC questions:

- **Activity:** How much activity is right for me? How long can I do something for without my pain getting worse?
- **Balance:** What is the best balance of rest and activity for me?
- **Consistency:** How can I keep doing a similar amount every day? How can I spread tasks out across the week?

Resources:

<https://my.livewellwithpain.co.uk/>

<https://butyoudontlooksick.com/articles/written-by-christine/the-spoon-theory/>

<https://www.versusarthritis.org/about-arthritis/managing-symptoms/managing-fatigue/>

People with hearing and speech difficulties

You can contact us using the Relay UK app. Textphone users will need to dial 18001 ahead of the number to be contacted.

Accessible Information

If you need this information in another format or language, please ask a member of staff.

Smoking

Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is a smoke-free organisation. You are not permitted to smoke or use e-cigarettes in any of the hospital buildings or grounds.

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MID Ref: 23010908

Publish date: January 2023

Review date: January 2025