

Timing and Fatigue in Daily Activities

You may have different levels of pain and fatigue at various hours of the day. Activities which are simple to perform in the morning may be difficult later in the day or vice versa. For example, if cooking dinner in the late afternoon is too stressful, prepare most of it in the morning to be reheated later.

How can you judge if an activity is too stressful?

- The earliest sign is a feeling of fatigue while you are in the midst of the activity. This seems obvious but many of us do not pay attention to our body. If the level of fatigue is out of proportion to the level of activity, the activity may be too stressful even if your mind says it should not be.
- If there is a change in the quality of movement...for example, you develop a tremor or "jerkiness" in your motions while performing the activity.
- If there is a change in the quantity of movement; that is decreased range of motion. For example, you can usually lift your arm to a certain height but that height lessens as you continue the activity.
- If you start to use compensatory movement; for example, you "hunch" your shoulder in order to raise your arm or you swing your leg out to the side instead of flexing at the hip.

Reprinted from Delaware Valley Polio Survivors Assoc. Newsletter, Fall, 2008