

# Energy Conservation: Dressing

## Before you begin, remember to:

1. Use controlled breathing (breathe in through your nose and breathe out through pursed lips) while dressing and undressing.
2. Coordinate your breathing with movement (exhale during exertion) – e.g. exhale while putting your arm through a sleeve.
3. Use oxygen as prescribed during the entire activity.

**Sit whenever possible to conserve energy**— e.g. on a low bed, chair, or toilet.

## Pace yourself:

- Take rest breaks between each clothing item or as needed.
- Give yourself enough time so that you don't rush.

## Organize:

- Keep closet space and dressing area well organized.
- Keep current season clothing and frequently used items easily accessible.
- Arrange furniture to minimize movement – e.g. dresser near a chair/bed.

## Plan ahead:

- Choose and organize all clothing ahead of time.
- Place the clothing in a convenient place within arm's reach.

**Minimize extra movements** – e.g. thread underwear and pants onto legs, stand up, and pull both items up at the same time.

## Eliminate bending if possible:

- Bring feet up to you while sitting.
- Use adaptive equipment— e.g. long-handled reacher or shoehorn, step stool, sock/stocking aid, dressing stick.

## Simplify clothing choices:

- Loose clothing with front fasteners—e.g. sweaters with zippers, bras
- Pants with elastic waistband
- Suspenders, as they do not constrict the diaphragm
- Slip-on shoes, Velcro closures, elastic laces
- Lightweight winter jacket

**Obtain assistance if required** for all or part of dressing. Consider a family member or personal support worker.