

Energy Conservation: Meal Preparation

Before you begin, remember to:

1. Use controlled breathing (breathe in through your nose and breathe out through pursed lips) while preparing meals.
2. Coordinate breathing with movement (exhale during exertion) – e.g. exhale while lifting items from counter.
3. Use oxygen as prescribed during the entire activity.

Pace yourself:

- Avoid multi-tasking – e.g. cooking multiple dishes at the same time.
- Take rest breaks as needed

Keep your kitchen organized – food, dishes, pots, pans and appliances used regularly should be kept within easy reach.

Gather all materials and ingredients before starting – e.g. take all fridge ingredients together instead of multiple trips.

Sit while preparing meals – e.g. on stool or rollator at counter/table.

Avoid carrying heavy items:

- Using both hands, slide heavy pots/dishes along counter rather than lifting.
- Place pots on the stove and fill them with water or food afterwards.
- Use a slotted spoon instead of draining an entire pot.
- Transport multiple items using lightweight containers on a trolley or your rollator.
- Use lightweight kitchen items.

When using an oven ensure proper body mechanics:

- Pull out the rack instead of reaching into the oven.
- Stand to the side when opening the oven door.

Decrease the amount of preparation:

- Buy frozen, pre-packaged, easy-to-prepare food.
- Prepare large batches of food and freeze it for future use.
- Prepare part of the meal in advance and then warm it up at meal time.
- Use a microwave or toaster oven (instead of stove or oven) if appropriate.

Reduce the effort in cleaning - e.g. soak dishes in hot water or let dishes air dry.

If possible, **ask for assistance for meal preparation or clean-up** – e.g. to take item out of oven.